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MISCELLANEOUS
OBSERVATIONS:
O R,
REMARKS

UPON
Some scatter'd Passages
IN THE
Bishop of *Bangor's* ANSWER
TO THE
Representation.

BEING
The CONCLUSION of the DEFENCE
of the *First Head* of the CHARGE of the
COMMITTEE.

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HENRY STERLING, M. A.
OF RICHMOND IN SENATE AND
OF ST. GEORGE'S HALL

LONDON
FOR HENRY CARRINGTON AND THE
ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

THE
PREFACE.

WHEN first I enter'd upon the ensuing Tract, I had no Intention to trouble the Reader with any thing in the way of Preface. But my Remarks upon Sincerity having since appeared in publick, together with a Preface by the Reverend the Dean of Chichester, I should be unjust both to him and to the Truth, should I let slip so proper an Occasion as this, of declaring to the World my entire Satisfaction in what he has there offered, towards clearing a certain Passage in the Representation from an Objection, to which I once thought it liable. The Passage I need not to repeat, it is cited at large in the Dean's Preface. The Objection may be found in the first Chapter of my Defence; and to these I refer the Reader.

It was once in my Thoughts to have examined my own Argument at large, and to have pointed out its general Defect, as it runs thro' every particular Branch of it. But it requires no great Judgment to discern, that the Conclusion relies entirely upon a Misunderstanding of the Phrase, to declare out of God's Favour, which I took in an absolute Sense, whereas it may as well be taken (and the Dean assures us that it was used by the Committee) in a relative one. The Strength of my Argument lies in this: That if Men shall be cast out of God's Favour for not complying with the Injunctions of the Church, tho' they be sincerely persuaded that what she enjoins is contrary to God's Will, i. e. to his revealed Will, the Authority of the Church must then be absolute; which is certainly true, if by being cast out of

God's Favour you mean being absolutely cast out of God's Favour, or being actually fallen under the Wrath of God. For this manifestly leaves every Christian under an Obligation to submit to whatever the Church enjoins, even tho' what she enjoins should be contrary to the express Laws or Declarations of the Gospel. But if by being cast out of God's Favour you understand with the Dean, having forfeited ones Claim or Title to the Favour of God, by, or according to, the Terms or Conditions of the Gospel, the Consequence will not be the same; because a Man's forfeiting his Title to the Favour of God according to these Conditions, does not necessarily imply his falling under the Wrath of God. He forfeits his Title to God's Favour according to the Conditions laid down in the Gospel, who does not fulfil those Conditions. But he only falls under the Wrath of God who transgresses his Duty. Now it is plain that Circumstances may so happen, as that it shall be a Man's Duty not to do that which yet is a Condition, upon the Performance of which only the Favour of God is promised in the Gospel; and this is the Case of all those who break the Laws of the Gospel thro' an involuntary Error. They certainly do as they ought to do, when they follow their Consciences, tho' erroneous, and therefore cannot for that reason fall under the Wrath of God; yet at the same time they break those Conditions, upon the Performance of which only the Favour of God is promised in the Gospel, and consequently can have no Title to the Favour of God in virtue of those Promises.

The Case then is now clear, that the Committee by claiming to the Church such a Power as will justify her in declaring those out of God's Favour who refuse to comply with her lawful Injunctions, tho' they be honest and sincere in that Refusal, did not mean to give her a Power of binding Men by her Laws, when they shall upon the best Examination appear to them to be contrary to the Laws of the Gospel, and consequently have not claimed

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claimed an absolute Authority. All that they mean is, that when Men transgress the Laws of the Gospel (one whereof is, that they obey them that have the Rule over them in Things indifferent) Obedience to these Laws being the Condition upon which only the Favour of God is promised in the Gospel, the Church may declare that such Persons have no Title to the Favour of God by the Gospel, and consequently has a Right to unchurch them, i. e. to exclude them from external and visible Communion. Such a Right as this makes no manner of Alteration in that Obligation which Men lye under to pursue that which their own Judgments or Consciences direct them to. In this Respect it leaves every Man just as it finds him, and if any Plea for Mercy can be founded upon this Bottom, it meddles not with it. If any one doubts whether the Committee did Justice to his Lordship, in supposing that he used the Phrase to declare out of God's Favour in this Sense, this one Observation, I hope, will satisfy him. His Lordship had just been stating the Case between Protestants and Papists, and had in effect declared that both Parties are justified by their private Persuasion of the Agreeableness of their respective Methods of Religion to the Will of God, i. e. by their Sincerity. Now by being justified I think his Lordship can mean nothing less than being justified as Christians; and justified as Christians none are, or can be, but those who are entitled to the Favour of God according to those Terms which Christianity proposes, i. e. according to the Terms of the Gospel. The Case being thus resolved, he makes the following Observation, which gave occasion to the Remark of the Committee, which we are now upon. If this were duly and impartially considered, it would be impossible for Men to — declare out of God's Favour any of their Fellow Creatures upon any — other Consideration than that of wicked Dishonesty and Insincerity, &c. It is plain here that by declaring Men out of God's Favour,

Favour, his Lordship means the same with declaring them not justified, because this, that Men are justified by their Sincerity, is alledged as a Reason why Men ought not to be declared out of God's Favour upon any other Consideration than that of Insincerity. Wherefore since by being justified his Lordship means being entitled to the Favour of God according to the Terms of the Gospel; by declaring out of God's Favour, or by declaring not justified, he must also mean declaring out of God's Favour according to the Terms of the Gospel.

Thus much I thought my self bound to say in Justice to the Committee, and after this I think I am not concerned with the Dean's Preface, any farther than to return him my humble Thanks for the undeserved Honour he has done me. However, that I may not be thought partial, I will take notice of one thing, viz. that there seems to be a very great Difference between the Consequence of his Lordship's Doctrine, as it is stated by the Dean, and as it is stated by the Committee. The Consequence as stated by the Committee is, That if his Lordship's Doctrine be true, there is an end of all Church Authority to OBLIGE any to external Communion, and of all Power that one Man, in what Station soever, can have over another in Matters of Religion. The Consequence as stated by the Dean is, That if his Lordship's Doctrine be true, there is in these Cases no room for the Church to exercise any Authority by unchristianing, unchurching, and declaring out of God's Favour, i. e. by EXCLUDING FROM external Communion. Now as wide as this Difference appears at first Sight to be, I doubt not but upon Trial it will admit of a very easy Reconciliation. For the Difference lies not in this, that the Dean in his way of stating the Consequence has contradicted the Committee, but in this only, that he has not stated the Consequence so fully as it is stated in the Representation. There are

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two things which the Committee seem to have intended to show in this Observation, viz. That his Lordship by teaching that there is but one Consideration, to wit, that of wicked Dishonesty and Insincerity, which will justify unchristianing, unchurching, or declaring out of God's Favour; and that of this one Consideration in these Cases, (i. e. in the Case of Christians chusing a Communion) God alone is Judge. That his Lordship, I say, by teaching this, had taken away from the Church all Authority, 1st. To impose Terms of Communion: And 2dly, To unchristian, unchurch, or declare out of God's Favour, i. e. to excommunicate. The first of these two Points is fully expressed in these Words, there is evidently an end of all Church Authority to oblige any to external Communion. The second is implied under these, and of all Power that one Man in what Station soever, can have over another in Matters of Religion. For that these Words relate to Excommunication is manifest from those which immediately follow; And this will shew what his Lordship's true Meaning is, under the many Colours and Disguises he makes use of when he speaks of EXCOMMUNICATION; and that he does not write more against the Abuse, than the use of it. Now as to the first of these Inferences from his Lordship's Doctrine, the Dean, you may perceive, has entirely dropt it; and the Reason, I suppose, was, because he thought there was no need to mention it, it being only a natural and obvious Deduction from the latter, which he has largely insisted upon. For if the Church may not declare those out of God's Favour according to the Terms laid down in the Gospel, who refuse to submit to her lawful Injunctions (which certainly she may not, if it be true that no Consideration but that of Insincerity will justify her in so doing, and that of this Consideration God alone is Judge) the Reason of this must be, because to comply with

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with the Lawful Injunctions of the Church is no Term of the Gospel; because, if to comply with the lawful Injunctions of the Church were a Term of the Gospel, it is plain that the Church might then declare that those who refuse to submit to those Injunctions, have forfeited their Title to the Favour of God, according to the Terms proposed in the Gospel. But to comply with the lawful Injunctions of the Church must be a Term of the Gospel, if the Gospel has given to the Church a Right to impose Terms of Communion, i. e. to oblige any to external Communion; and consequently, since his Lordship has in Vertue of his Doctrine, denied the one, he is bound in Vertue of the same Doctrine to deny the other also.

I have said this only to satisfy those who may doubt it, that the Consequence as stated by the Dean, and as stated by the Committee, amounts in the end to the very same. For were I speaking to his Lordship only, I might have spared my self the Trouble of justifying this Conclusion; because it is one of those Consequences which his Lordship himself (a) owns, and is fond of, as putting an end to that which, in his Judgment, there ought to be an end of. But here a Question may be moved, viz. whether it be rightly inferred from his Lordship's Doctrine, that he has taken away from the Church all Authority of Excommunicating, i. e. of shutting Men out from external and visible Communion? Now to this I answer in general, that he hath evidently taken away all Authority to excommunicate, in all those Cases where there is room to suppose that the Offender acts with Sincerity. For if none ought to be declared out of God's Favour according to the Terms or Conditions of the Gospel, upon any other Consideration than that of wicked Dishonesty and In-

(a) Answer to the Represent. p. 108.

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sincerity, it is certain that none ought to be excluded from visible Communion upon any other Consideration, because Exclusion from visible Communion, always proceeds, or ought to proceed, upon a Supposition that the Person to be excluded has aforehand shut himself out from the Favour of God, according to the Terms of the Gospel. And if none ought to be excluded from external Communion but insincere Persons, the Church, before she excludes them, ought to be assured of their Insincerity, unless you will say that the Church may exclude Men from external Communion for a Cause which is not evident. More particularly therefore I observe, 1. That his Lordship by this Doctrine hath taken away from the Church all Authority to excommunicate for Disobedience to Church Injunctions. For this is the very Case to which his Lordship himself has applied his Rule, and with respect to which he affirms (how truly I do not say) that God alone is Judge of the Sincerity or Insincerity of Men's Hearts. 2. He hath also taken away from the Church all Authority to excommunicate for Disobedience to many of the express Laws of the Gospel; particularly those which relate to Faith, or are purely of a positive Nature; because in all these Cases it is plain that there is room for Ignorance and Error to creep in, and consequently room to suppose that the Offender acts with Sincerity. And that you may not think I carry this Point farther than his Lordship intended it, he himself has also applied his Rule to such Offenders as these. For he has applied his Rule to Papists as well as Protestants, who, as every one knows, differ from us in many things which are very far from being indifferent. Suppose then that any should arise up among us, who should plead for the grossest Corruptions in the Church of Rome: Suppose, for Instance, that they should pay Adoration to Images, to Saints and Angels, or that they should worship the consecrated Bread and Wine;

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i. e. Suppose them to be gross Idolaters; may we declare such Persons to have forfeited their Title to God's Favour by the Terms of the Gospel, and in consequence hereof shut them out from our Communion? No, we may not; and his Lordship has told us the Reason why, viz. Because, for ought we can tell, all this may be done sincerely! The same thing may be said as to any other Heresies you can well imagine. For 3. His Lordship, so far as I can perceive, has, in Vertue of this Doctrine, left no room for the Church to exercise any Authority by excommunicating, except only for Disobedience to Laws acknowledged by the Offenders themselves. And of this, I suppose, all those are guilty, who allow themselves in gross Immoralities, which being direct Violations of that general Law of Nature, which God has implanted in the Hearts of all Men, one may always be sure to find wicked Dishonesty and Insincerity at the Bottom. His Lordship's Principle therefore cannot, I think; reach to such Cases as these, and therefore I cannot say, that in Vertue of it he has absolutely taken from the Church all Power of Excommunication. The Dean of Chichester seems to have been sensible of this, and accordingly has in his way of Arguing, confined himself to those Cases to which his Lordship had confined his Assertion. If the Committee meant to do so too, their Inference is in every respect exact: If not, his Lordship may, if he pleases, charge them with Want of Accuracy, but not with Injustice, in saying here, that he has written against the Use of Excommunication. For tho' he has not done it in this Place, there are Places enough to be found where he has, as I have shewn at large in (b) another Treatise.

(b) See the Defence, Chap. IV. and V.

And now let the Reader consider what a fine Idea his Lordship has given us of Church Communion, whilst he has made the Church to be a gathering of Christians, i. e. of Believers in Christ, as opposite in their Notions concerning the particular Doctrines of Christianity as Light is to Darkness, and held together by the single invisible Band of Sincerity! Or rather let him consider what a fine Idea he has given us of himself, whilst he has denied the very Being of that Power, which he as a Bishop of the Church of England is bound to exercise! His Lordship has long ago been put in mind of the solemn Profession he made at his Consecration, viz. that by the Help of God he would correct and punish, according to such Authority as he hath by God's Word, and as should be committed to him by the Ordinance of this Realm, such as be unquiet, disobedient, and criminous in his Diocese. Will his Lordship say that the Ordinance of this Realm (which I need not observe is here supposed to be agreeable to the Word of God) gives him Authority to excommunicate in those Cases only in which there is no room to suppose that the Offender acts with Sincerity? I hope he will not. And yet by his own Rule he ought to excommunicate at least in none but such; because according to him none at least but those who wickedly offend against their own Consciences are the proper Subjects of Excommunication. I speak not this as if I thought that the Truth of this, or any other Case, was to be determined by the Laws and Constitutions of this particular Church. No, Churches may err as well as private Men, and the Church of England has no greater Pretence to Infallibility than any other. But I think verily that his Lordship ought either to change his Mind in this Particular, or if he cannot, to give up a Trust which he cannot execute without acting contrary to his own Opinion.

As to the Truth of the Case, if I may be allowed to declare my Sense of it, the Church is no more concerned to enquire into the Sincerity of Mens Hearts than the Civil Magistrate. She sits as a visible Judge as well as he. She judges the outward Actions of Men, considered as affecting the good Order and Government of the Body Spiritual, as he does the same, considered as affecting the good Order and Government of the Body Politick. The Laws of the Gospel are her Rule, as the Statutes of the Realm are his. When these Laws are openly violated, she has a Right to proceed against the Offender as the Gospel directs, i. e. to exclude him from her Communion; and this Sentence of hers is no more to be over-ruled by any Plea of Conscience, than the Sentence of the other. 'Tis true the Church offends when she excommunicates any for an undue Cause, i. e. when she excommunicates those who have not transgressed the Laws of the Gospel; and so does the Civil Magistrate too, when he punishes any who have not transgressed the Laws of the Commonwealth. Yet as his Sentence, tho' undeservedly passed, is not reversible by any inferior Members of the Civil Society, so neither is the Sentence of the Church reversible by any inferior Members of the Ecclesiastical. Both Sentences are definitive with respect to the present State of the Offenders, and the wrong Judgment shall not be accounted for, till both they and their Judges shall appear together before the Tribunal of God.

As this is the only Foot upon which the Right of Excommunication can be maintained consistently with sound Sense, so I am persuaded it answers to the Practice of the Church in all Ages. Many Instances we have from the beginning, of Persons excommunicated for erroneous Opinions as well as for immoral Practices. But what Instances can we find in all Antiquity, where

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the Governours of the Church have made it any Part of their Consideration, whether these Errors were embraced sincerely or insincerely? In truth, were the Church to enter upon such an Enquiry as this, it would act a very ridiculous Part; and to imagine that she is bound to enter upon such an Enquiry, is in effect to deny that in Cases of this nature she has any Power to excommunicate. For what difference is there in saying that the Church hath no Power to excommunicate, and in saying that she hath a Power to excommunicate under such Circumstances, as it is in the nature of the thing impossible she should judge of.

As to the State of those who are excommunicated, with respect to the Favour of God, the Church neither does nor can pretend to meddle with it, so as by her Sentence to make it either better or worse. The Ministers of Christ considered as Governours, have nothing to do but to preserve outward Order and Discipline, and therefore no Sentence passed by them can possibly affect the State of Christians any farther than with respect to outward and visible Communion. I am so fully persuaded that this is the Sense of the Committee, that I must needs stop here to do them Justice against his Lordship, who would very fain persuade us of the contrary. (c) Excommunication, says he, is mentioned — as having to do with the Favour or Anger of God, and great Displeasure is expressed against me for not making the Anger of God DEPENDENT upon it. This is his Lordship's Charge; but it will require more Skill even than he himself is Master of, to make it appear to be true. For the Words of the Committee are no other than these: Your Lordships will judge from hence, what View he has in

(c) Answ. to the Repref. p. 109.

pronouncing — Human Excommunications to have nothing to do with the Favour or Anger of God. From whence should their Lordships judge? Why (as the Words immediately preceding manifestly shew) from the Passage which they had before cited, in which, (as they observed) his Lordship had pleaded not only against the Abuse, but against the Use of Excommunication. And what should their Lordships infer from hence? What? Why certainly not that it was the Bishop's Opinion that Human Excommunications have nothing to do with the Favour or Anger of God (for this had been at this time a very ridiculous Observation) but that his Lordship's View was much deeper than his Words sometimes bespoke it to be; that therefore when he pronounced Human Excommunications to have nothing to do with the Favour or Anger of God, it must not be supposed that hereby he had expressed the whole of what he intended to deny, which indeed was not only this, but that there is any such thing in the Church as a Power to excommunicate at all. That this is the true Sense of the Passage will be farther evident, by considering the Manner in which it is introduced by the Committee. This, say they, will shew what his Lordship's true Meaning is, under the many COLOURS and DISGUISES he makes use of, when he speaks of Excommunication — Your Lordships will judge from hence what View he has in pronouncing, &c. This, I say, manifestly shews, that in the Opinion of the Committee his Lordship's pronouncing Human Excommunications to have nothing to do with the Favour or Anger of God, was only a Colour made use of by him to disguise his real Sentiment, that the Church has no Power at all to excommunicate; just as his pronouncing in general that the Church hath no absolute Authority, was a Colour to disguise his real Sentiment, that the Church hath no Authority.

If I mistake not, then this Passage is so far from shewing that the Committee were displeased at his Lordship for not making the Anger of God dependent upon the Sentence of Excommunication, that it rather shews the contrary. I will not deny but that the Committee have in one place spoken, as if in their Opinion the State of Christ's Subjects with respect to the Favour of God might be affected by the Decisions of Men. In treating upon this Passage (d) formerly I took it for granted that by Decisions the Committee understood judicial Sentences, but upon farther Consideration I do not think that to be so very clear. For Laws may properly enough be termed Decisions, and if the Committee used the Word in that Sense only, that Passage will not relate to Excommunication at all, nor consequently be apposite to the Purpose for which it was then produced. But admitting that by Decisions the Committee did mean judicial Sentences, it will then be true indeed that in the Opinion of the Committee the Sentence of Excommunication may affect the State of Christians as to the Favour of God. But still it will not be true that in the Opinion of the Committee the Sentence of Excommunication can affect the State of Christians with respect to the Favour of God in his Lordship's Sense, i. e. so as that the Favour or Anger of God shall be dependent upon it. For I have long ago observed, that according to the Committee the Sentence of Excommunication does then only affect the State of Christians with respect to the Favour or Anger of God, when it is rightly or deservedly passed, which it will be very absurd to say, if it be supposed that the Anger of God is at all dependent upon that Sentence, or (which is the same thing) if the Sentence of Excommunication be supposed to be

(d) Defence, Chap. 4.

at all the Cause of God's Anger. The most therefore that can be made of this Matter is, that the Committee have by an usual Impropriety of Speech called that the Effect, which, to speak properly, can only be the Attendant of Excommunication. And his Lordship methinks should be the more ready to pardon them in this, because he himself is guilty of the same Fault. He constantly supposes that the State of Christ's Subjects with respect to the Favour of God, is affected by the Sentence of Christ. But in Strictness and Propriety of Speech the Case is not so, because 'tis plain that the Cause of God's Favour or Anger is not the Sentence of Christ, but that Behaviour of a Man upon the Account of which that Sentence is pronounced by Christ. When Christ therefore pronounces Sentence, what happens? Why, the Man is either rewarded or punished, according as the Sentence is. But it is plain that the immediate and proper Cause of a Man's being either rewarded or punished, is the Favour or Anger of God; and this Favour or Anger is not at all founded upon the Sentence of Christ, but, as I said, upon the Man's Behaviour. You see then that the State of Christians with respect to the Favour or Anger of God, receives no manner of Alteration from the Sentence of Christ, and consequently cannot properly be said to be affected by that Sentence. All that can be said is, that the Favour or Anger of God constantly attends upon the Sentence of Christ; so that those whom he adjudges to be worthy of Reward, are in God's Favour, and shall certainly be rewarded; and those whom he adjudges worthy of Punishment, are under God's Displeasure, and shall certainly be punished. And this is what the Committee mean when they say (if indeed they have said any such thing) that the State of Christians with respect to the Favour of God, is affected by the Sentence of the Church when rightly passed, i. e. they mean that the Favour or Anger of God does then attend upon that Sentence.

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Sentence. If his Lordship will still find fault with the Expression, he must also blame himself; but as to the Truth of the Assertion, he cannot deny it, unless he will deny that the Church has a Right to pass any Sentence at all; and then indeed it will be a ridiculous thing to enquire whether the Favour or Anger of God attends upon her Sentence, or attends upon it not.

Having gone thus far in doing Justice to the Committee, I hope the Reader will excuse me if I detain him a little longer, whilst I do Justice to my self, with respect to a Passage or two in my Remarks upon Sincerity, against which, as I understand, some Exceptions have been made. The first of these Passages is at Page 18: where I have laid it down, that a Man may be under such Circumstances as that he must needs sin in which way soever he acts, or whether he follows his Conscience or follows it not. The Case there put in order to justify this Assertion, is that of a Man whose Conscience is wrong informed thro' his own Neglect. In which Case say I, p. 19. If he acts against his Conscience, he sins that way for this very reason, because he acts against his Conscience. And if he acts according to his Conscience, he sins that way, because he breaks the Law of God thro' his own Fault. The Reader needs not, I suppose, be advertized, that when I say a Man sins if he acts according to his Conscience, my meaning is, not that the acting according to his Conscience is the Ground or Reason of his sinning (which indeed is a Contradiction) but that he sins by that same Act in which he follows his Conscience, for another Reason which I have there assigned. This being observed, I must confess that for my part

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I cannot see but the Case comes fully up to the Point. For that a Man sins in acting against his Conscience, was never yet questioned. And I think 'tis as plain that in the Case now put he sins too if he acts according to his Conscience. For, 1. Here is a Divine Law which he is supposed to transgress. 2. This Transgression is supposed to be voluntary. Now if a voluntary Transgression of a Divine Law be not a Sin, I do not pretend to understand what Sin means. The only Difficulty that can arise upon this Point, I think, is this. That for as much as all Sin supposes the Transgression of some Law by which a Man is bound, it will follow, that if a Man may sin which way soever he acts, it must be said that he may be bound by contrary Laws at the same time, i. e. by the Law of Conscience, which directs him one way, and by the Law of God, which directs him another. Now to obey contrary Laws at the same time is impossible; and therefore to suppose that a Man may be bound by contrary Laws at the same time, is to suppose that he may be bound to an Impossibility, which is absurd. This, I say, is the main and only Difficulty with which this Question seems to me to be involved; and in answer to it I shall, 1. Put it as a Query to my Reader, whether tho' it be absurd to suppose that a Man may be bound by another to an Impossibility, it may not yet be supposed that he may by his own voluntary Act bind himself to an Impossibility? If this may be supposed, the Objection has no Force, as is evident; and to me I confess there seems no greater Difficulty in conceiving this, than there is in conceiving how a voluntary Transgression of a Divine Law is not Sin; which must be maintained by those who say, that to transgress a Divine Law under a Conscience voluntarily erroneous, is not Sin.

But

But 2. If this Supposition will not be admitted of, I say farther, That to make those Acts by which a Man under a Conscience voluntarily erroneous, transgresses the Law of God, sinful, there is no need to suppose that he is bound by the Law of God, and the Law of Conscience at the same time; because there may be a Communication of Sin from one Action to another, and consequently an Action may be sinful, altho' a Man, at the time he does it, is not bound by any Law at all. If a Man looses his Reason by excessive Drinking, and in his Distraction kills his Neighbour, he is a Murderer, and the Law will punish him as such. I ask then; What is it that makes this Man guilty of Murder? Is it that he is, even under Distraction, bound by that Law, Thou shalt not kill? If you say, it is, you then grant that a Man may be bound to an Impossibility; for to be bound to fulfil a Law which a present Impediment unqualifies a Man to fulfil, is to be bound to an Impossibility. But the Question needs not be resolved thus: For to make this Action Murder, nothing more is required than to make it sinful, because wickedly, i. e. sinfully, to kill another, is the very Notion of Murder. Now I think verily that this Action becomes sinful in Vertue of the Action antecedent to it. For Drunkenness is a Sin, and therefore the Killing which is subsequent upon it, must be so too. If any one asks how it comes to pass that the Nature of Sin is thus communicated from one Act to another; the Answer is ready, viz. That the Voluntariness which was in the first Act, does not cease in the Second, but is communicated to both. Thus in the Case before us; That a Man makes himself drunk is a voluntary Act; therefore it is also a voluntary Act that he kills his Neighbour.

To apply this then to the Case of an erroneous Conscience as stated in my Argument. The Law of God, as it stands in the Gospel, commands a Man to do one thing; he thro' his own Neglect and Carelessness mistakes this Law, and so in Conscience becomes bound to do another; and by this very Act, tho' he does as he ought with respect to the Law of Conscience, yet he sins with respect to the Law of God, which, in following his Conscience, he transgresses. To make this out, it is not necessary to say that he is bound by the Law of God against his Conscience: It is enough to alledge that this Act borrows its Nature from the antecedent Neglect, which being sinful, the Transgression of the Divine Law, which is subsequent upon it, must be sinful too.

I will now therefore leave to my Reader's Choice one of these two Things, viz. Either 1st. To grant that a Man by his own voluntary Act may bind himself to an Impossibility. Or 2dly, To say that an Act may be sinful, tho' a Man is not bound by that Law which he transgresses, at the time of his doing it, upon the Account of some antecedent Act, in Vertue whereof, he transgresses that Law, and which is itself sinful. Either of these being granted, my Assertion stands good, and one of them, I think, (for I will not venture to be positive in so nice a Case) cannot fairly be denied me. But if the Reader shall be unwilling to trouble himself with such Questions as these, he has my free Leave to let it alone; because the Controversy between the Bishop and me has not the least Dependence upon it. For the whole of the Question which has now been debated, is, whether a Man may sin by that very Act

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Act in which he follows his Conscience; which whether it be determined for or against me, my Argument will be the very same. The Bishop says, it is absurd to suppose that a Man should be entitled to God's Wrath which Way soever he acts. To show that this is no Absurdity, I put the Case of a Conscience voluntarily erroneous. Now 'tis plain that a Man will be entitled to God's Wrath by one sinful Act as well as by another; and therefore tho' it were not true that a Man who in such a Case follows his Conscience, sins in that very Act in which he follows his Conscience; yet since it cannot be denied that he has sinned in the antecedent Act of Neglect, and since this Sin must needs remain upon him at least so long as his Conscience continues to be erroneous through his own Fault; it is plain that such a Man will still be entitled to God's Wrath, which Way soever he acts. Those therefore who are not convinced by what I have now offer'd, have my Consent to alter those Passages in my Book, which suppose Sin to be committed in the very Act in which a Man follows an erroneous Conscience. For Instance; when I say, that a Man may be under such Circumstances, as that he must needs sin which way soever he acts, they may put it, that a Man may be under such Circumstances, as that he must needs be under Sin, or in a State of Sin, which way soever he acts. When I say that it is a Sin for a Man (in the Case we are now speaking of) to act according to his Conscience; they may put it, he is guilty of Sin, or in a State of Sin, even whilst, or notwithstanding he acts according to his Conscience; and so for all the rest. There is certainly a Difference between these two Ways of speaking; but the Argument, as every one sees, amounts in the End to the very same.

And

And thus much may suffice to have been spoken concerning the first Passage. The next you have at Page 27. where I advance, that those who have always acted with Sincerity, (tho' they have served God in a wrong Way) may be sure of meeting with a good Reward. In this it is thought by some that I have said more than should be said, because more than can be proved. But let it be observed, 1. That by being sure, I do not mean having any Claim or Title by the Promises in the Gospel: For the Gospel contains no Promises, that I know of, but to those who perform the Conditions of the Gospel. Nor 2. By a good Reward do I mean any Reward which is annexed to the Conditions of the Gospel. But 3. The Case at once is this: I think it is plainly revealed in the Gospel, that there is a Future State either of Happiness or Misery reserved for all Men. Now Reason tells us that those who have always acted according to the best of their Abilities, (i. e. who have always acted with Sincerity) shall not be condemned; because God cannot justly condemn Men for not doing that which was always impossible to them. All this being granted, the Inference I think is strong, that such Persons shall be happy, and consequently shall have a good Reward; for every State or Degree of Happiness in a Life to come is a good Reward. But if we may be sure, what does it signify, you'll say, how or by what Means we are sure? I answer, it would signify nothing, provided you could be sure of the Gospel Rewards, any otherwise than by fulfilling the Conditions of the Gospel. But this, I say, you cannot, tho' you may be sure of what I call a good Reward. The Rewards annexed to the Performance of the Gospel Covenant, are set forth to us under the Notion of a Kingdom, where we shall
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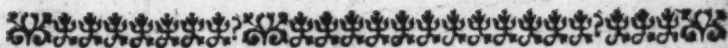
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forever reign with the blessed Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind. Now as (for any thing that God has been pleased to reveal to the contrary) this State of Happiness may be very different from any other State; so the Degrees of Happiness in the one, may be far superior to the Degrees of Happiness in the other. Wherefore the being sure of a good Reward, i. e. the being sure of Happiness hereafter, does by no Means necessarily imply the being sure of the Gospel Rewards. God may reward all sincere Persons well, and yet reward those infinitely better who have been taken into Covenant with himself, and have fulfilled the Conditions of it, for no other Reason than because it pleaseth him. And this is the great Fault that I find with his Lordships Doctrine, even that he hath taken this Power out of the Hands of the Almighty, and bound him down as it were by his Laws to reward all alike, without any Regard had to the particular Methods of Religion which they have followed. Had his Lordship said no more than this, That none shall be damned who have always used their best Endeavours to please God; or had he said that there is good Ground from the Mercy of God to hope, that if a Man firmly believes in Christ, and expects Salvation thro' his Merits; such Mistakes about the particular Laws of his Religion, as he shall have fallen into, either thro' Human Frailty, or for Want of Abilities, shall be no Obstruction or Impediment as to his eternal Interest; had his Lordship, I say, advanced no more than this, I confess for my self, that I should have seen no Reason why he ought to have been blamed. But to teach that Men are justified, i. e. (for I can understand him no otherwise) justified as Christians merely by their Sincerity; That this gives them a Title to the Favour of God equally with those who have fulfilled the

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Conditions of the Covenant, and in consequence hereof, to make Obedience to the *Laws* of the Gospel, to signify nothing with respect to Salvation; this, I think, is a Doctrine which requires something more than bare Conjecture and Imagination to support it.

And thus I have delivered my Sentiments freely upon this Subject. I am not so sanguine as to be under any Assurance that what I have offer'd will meet with the Readers Approbation. But I have this Comfort, which I hope I always shall have, that if I am mistaken, either in this, or in any other Point, I am very ready to submit to better Information.



ERRATA.

Page 17. line 16. for *Rules* r. *Rule*. p. 18. l. 22 for *Doctrines* r. *Doctrine*. p. 20. l. 35. for *Points* r. *Point*. p. 28. l. 5, and 33. for *Men's* r. *Man's*. p. 32. l. 35. for *Laws* r. *Law*. p. 54. after extravagant Consequences, between the two Paragraphs put *V*.



MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS, &c.

I.

HAVING found that my first Attempt against the Lord Bishop of BANGOR was not altogether unacceptable to the Publick: I quickly resolved with my self to proceed, as my Leisure should permit, to do what farther Service I could to a Cause in which the Honour of the Reverend and Learned Committee, and (which is of greater Moment) the Safety of our Established Church, are so nearly concerned. As to the main of the first Branch of the Charge, I have *there* (as I hope) so fully vindicated it against his Lordship's Exceptions, that the Reader will not expect to find any thing added to it here. But there are in his Lordship's *Sermon* and *Preservative* several Matters, which tho' not properly reducible to, have yet, on Account of their Nearness of Relation, been taken notice of by the Committee under this head. Of these the principal is his Lordship's doctrine (for so I think it may emphatically be called) concerning SINCERITY; which therefore I have consider'd in a distinct Treatise. The rest not affording, each of them, Matter enough for

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any large Discussion, I judg'd it would be more proper to throw all together under the *Title* above; and when I have gone thro' these, it will, I hope, be thought that I have said as much as is necessary to be said upon this Part of the Controversy.

II.

My first Observation shall relate to a *REGULAR SUCCESSION* in the *Ministry*, and particularly in the *Episcopal Order*, which the *Committee* charge his Lordship with having thrown Contempt upon, by calling it a *Trifle*, a *Nicety*, a *Dream*, and an *Invention of Men*. It will, I suppose, be allowed, that if his Lordship has treated a *regular Succession* after this manner, he has thrown Contempt upon it to purpose. For what Things are there which deserve less to be regarded, *i. e.* which are more contemptible, than *Trifles* and *Niceties*, than the *Dreams* and *Inventions of Men*? — But his Lordship denies this Charge; (a) *I have never*, says he, *thrown the least Contempt upon a regular Succession of Ministers in general, or of Bishops in particular*. His Defence you have in a few words. (b) *What I have bestowed these Words upon, is a regular uninterrupted Succession, made absolutely necessary to the Favour of God; without which the sincerest Christians shall not arrive at the Happiness of Heaven.*

Here is then a Case of Fact to be stated between his Lordship and the *Committee*, *viz.* whether his Lordship be justly chargeable with having thrown Contempt upon a *regular Succession*. And in order hereto there are two Things which

(a) *Answ. to the Repres. Chap. 1. Sect. 18. p. 89.*

(b) *Ibid. p. 90.*

I observe in this Plea, *viz.* 1. That his Lordship distinguishes between a *regular* Succession and an *uninterrupted* Succession, and declares that what he hath said about *Successions*, relates not to the former, but to the latter. 2. That his Lordship plainly insinuates as if what he had called a *Nicety*, a *Trifle*, a *Dream*, and an *Invention* of Men, was not simply even an *uninterrupted* Succession, but an *uninterrupted* Succession made absolutely necessary to the Favour of God. Now as to the first of these, *viz.* his Lordship's *Distinction*, it seems to me to be founded in no real Difference, i. e. if you understand the Words in a large or general Signification. For a *Succession* can be said to be *uninterrupted* only with respect to that Rule or Method, whatever it be, according to which that *Succession* ought to proceed; consequently an *uninterrupted* Succession means neither more nor less than a Succession, the Order, i. e. the Regularity whereof has not been broken. To say therefore in general that a *Succession* may be interrupted and yet regular, or regular and yet interrupted, is to say that which implies in it a palpable Contradiction. There is but one way then by which this *Distinction* can possibly be made to bear, which is, by considering the Regularity of the Succession according to one Rule, and the Uninterruptedness according to another: And this I take to be truly the Case. By a *regular* Succession his Lordship means (or he means nothing) such a Succession of Persons in the Ministry, as is agreeable to that Rule or Method which God has appointed for the Conveyance of the Ministerial Office. When he speaks of an *uninterrupted* Succession, he does not, he cannot speak with respect to the same Rule; for then, as I have shewn, a *regular* Succession and an *uninterrupted* Succession will be the same. He speaks

then with respect to some *other* Rule. And what Rule is that? Why, that Rule which makes it necessary that the *Ministerial Power*, which was first given by Christ to his Apostles, should have been conveyed by them to others, and from those again to others, and so on *successively* throughout all Ages. This is what Men constantly understand when they speak of an *uninterrupted Succession* of Ministers, even an *Order* or *Succession* of Men, amongst whom the *Ministerial Office* has been constantly handed down from one to another. And that this is what his Lordship means by an *uninterrupted Succession*, is plain from another Passage in the same Paragraph, where his Distinction is, I think, more accurately expressed. *I think*, says he, *there may be REGULARITY preserved* (i. e. that the *Ministerial Office* may be conveyed regularly, or according to God's Appointment) *without the Supposition of a SUCCESSION absolutely UNINTERRUPTED from the beginning.*

This then is his Lordship's Opinion, That a Man may lawfully, or according to God's Appointment, be called to the *Ministry*, tho' his Commission be not derived to him thro' an *uninterrupted Succession*. What Principles his Lordship must necessarily maintain in consequence of this Doctrine, shall be consider'd by and by. For the present it will be more proper to take notice, how little this *Distinction* between a *Regular Succession*, and an *uninterrupted Succession*, contributes towards removing the Charge of the *Committee*. The *Committee* say that his Lordship has thrown Contempt upon a *Regular Succession*. His Lordship replies in effect, that what he hath said, relates not to a *Regular Succession*, but to an *uninterrupted Succession*. But what if the *Committee* know of no *regular Succession* which is not
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uninterrupted, i. e. what if they know of no *Rule* or *Method* by which the *Ministerial Office* can be conveyed, but what necessarily implies an *uninterrupted Succession*? What? Why then I think 'tis plain, that with the *Committee* a *regular Succession* and an *uninterrupted Succession* will be all one, and consequently, that his Lordship by alledging, that what he hath said relates only to an *uninterrupted Succession*, will not have denied any thing which the *Committee* hath affirmed. Now this, for any thing that appears to the contrary in the *Representation*, was in Truth the Case, which methinks his Lordship should have a little consider'd, before he had been so very free in censuring the *Committee*. "Not to trouble your Lordships (*say they*) with the Concept thrown on a *regular Succession* of the *Ministry*, and of *your own Order* in particular, for which his Lordship has found no better Words than *Trifles, Niceties, Dreams, Inventions of Men, &c.*" In which Words, (says the Bishop in his *Answer*) it is implied that I have found no better Words than these for a *regular Succession* of the *Ministry*, and of *Bishops* in particular. Then follows this severe Reflection; I am confident, if they could have shown this evidently, they would not have scrupled it merely for fear of giving my Lords the Bishops a little Trouble, but would have produced the very Passages in which this is done. Till they are so just as to do this, I must deny that there are any such Passages, &c. This, if I mistake not, amounts to a heavy Charge: For his Lordship here manifestly supposes that the *Committee* had accused him of something, which they knew in their own Consciences they were not able to prove, and industriously passed it over, under the Colour of not being troublesome to the Bishops. His Lordship himself speaks thus much:

(c) It

(c) *It would (says he) be much more honourable for the learned Committee to enter openly into this Matter, and to maintain that plain essential Point of Uninterrupted Succession, than to hint at things in such a manner, as represents them in quite another Light than that in which I have spoke of them in my Book, and this UNDER THE PRETENCE of not troubling the Bishops. I will presume to say, that it would have been much more honourable for his Lordship to have spared this Reflection. For what Ground is there for such an Imputation? Why, the main Pretence you have already heard, viz. That his Lordship thinks there may be Regularity without an uninterrupted Succession; thence he infers, that the Committee must needs have thought so too; and in consequence hereof, must have knowingly and wittingly charged him with that which they found themselves unable to prove! But surely his Lordship ought to have been very certain, that the Committee had the same Notion about Regularity which he has, before he had been (as he expresses himself) confident that they were guilty of so much Dishonesty. For, as I just now observed, if the Committee thought that an uninterrupted Succession was the only way by which Holy Orders can be conveyed regularly, or according to God's Appointment, it was manifestly the same thing whether they called it a regular Succession, or an uninterrupted Succession; But there is not the least Hint in the Representation, by which any one can be induced so much as to suspect, that the Committee had any other Notions of Regularity in this Case, than what supposes an uninterrupted Succession; and there needs not, I think, any great Penetration*

to discern that the *Committee* are, even in his Lordship's own Opinion, of the Number of those who plead for an *uninterrupted Succession*. For why else does his Lordship cry out, *It would be more honourable for the Committee to maintain the Point of uninterrupted Succession?* Were the *Committee* bound in Honour to maintain a Point, which in their own Consciences they thought ought not to be maintained? Let any one now judge of the Case, and see with how much Decency his Lordship has complain'd of *Calumny* from others, who has not scrupled upon so slender a Foundation to lay so bitter, (or to use a Word which his Lordship loves to repeat) so cruel an Accusation against a venerable Body of Men.

To proceed; the Charge of the *Committee* relating (for ought that appears to the contrary) to an *uninterrupted Succession*, it may then possibly stand good, if it be true that his Lordship has thrown *Contempt* upon that. But even this his Lordship seems willing to dissemble. For,

2. His Lordship plainly insinuates as if what he has called a *Trifle*, a *Nicety*, a *Dream*, &c. was not simply an *uninterrupted Succession*, but an *uninterrupted Succession made absolutely necessary to the Favour of God*. This his Lordship farther supports in his *Answer to a late Book written by the Reverend Dr. Sherlock*, p. 97. *The regular Succession (says he) which I ever called the Invention of Men, a Nicety, &c. was no other but a regular uninterrupted Succession, expressly considered as something made absolutely necessary to the Eternal Salvation of Christians.* Which is as much as to say (for so the Words imply) that he had called an *uninterrupted Succession* a *Nicety*, a *Trifle*, a *Dream*, &c. then, and then only, when made necessary, or when considered as necessary to Eternal Salvation.

on. His Lordship surely found himself under some Difficulty, when he was induced to make such a Plea as this; in which I may presume to say, that there is neither *Truth* nor *Consistency*! Not *Consistency*; for 1. To say that an *uninterrupted Succession* is *then*, and *then only*, a *Trifle* and a *Nicety*, when considered as absolutely necessary to Salvation, is to say, that an *uninterrupted Succession* when considered as absolutely necessary to Salvation, does *then*, and *then only*, signify nothing to Salvation; which is not Sense. 2. To say that an *uninterrupted Succession* is *then*, and *then only*, a *Dream*, and an *Invention* of Men, when considered as absolutely necessary to Salvation, is a manifest Absurdity: For if an *uninterrupted Succession* be at all a *Dream*, and an *Invention* of Men, it must be so, consider it how you will. The being made necessary to Salvation, or not necessary, cannot in the least alter the Case, *i. e.* it cannot either make that which is an *Invention*, to be no *Invention*, or that which is not an *Invention*, to be an *Invention*. If it could, I must tell his Lordship, that even *his own regular Succession* may be an *Invention*, as well as an *uninterrupted Succession*. But why this to his Lordship, who not only sees this Consequence, but what is more, will stand by it? (d) The Dean, (says he) himself acknowledges, even a *REGULAR Succession*, made absolutely necessary, to be an *unwarrantable Extreme*, and consequently, an *Invention* of Men: MUCH MORE is a *REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED Succession*—How my Lord! Does the Dean acknowledge a *regular Succession*—to be an *unwarrantable Extreme*! I will answer for him that he acknowledges no such thing: But I hope in the mean

time that I may have leave to infer, that you your self do acknowledge what you are pleased to say the *Dean* acknowledges; and consequently, that you do acknowledge even a *regular* Succession (in your own Sense of that Word) *when made absolutely necessary, to be an Invention.* Upon the same Terms his Lordship very consistently declares, he should not in the least scruple to call even a *regular* Succession a *Trifle* and a *Nicety*. For speaking of *Regularity* in general, he says, that tho' he has (e) not dropt one Word against it, yet when Men are come to lay the eternal Salvation of Christians upon it, he is not afraid of calling it comparatively a *Trifle* and a *Nicety*. Why comparatively I pray? For as to *absolute* Niceties, and *absolute* Trifles, I question whether there are any such things in Nature; and therefore every thing that is a *Trifle* or a *Nicety*, must be so comparatively, or with respect to something. With respect to what then is it, that his Lordship is not afraid to call even a *regular* Succession a *Trifle*, and a *Nicety*? Why, every one sees that it must be with respect to *Salvation*, or with respect to nothing. And this his Lordship owns to be his Meaning a few Lines after, where he explains this *Comparatively*, by, *with respect to the Terms of Salvation.* Behold then how happily his Lordship has refined upon this Controversy! So very nice and subtil is he in his Distinctions, that he has not left the difference so much as of a Hairs breadth between that which he denies, and that which he affirms! The Committee have charged him with calling a *regular* Succession a *Trifle*; a *Nicety*, a *Dream*, &c. Hereupon his Lordship heavily complains of unjust Dealing;

(e) Answ. to the Represent. *Ibid.*

declares that he has not dropt one Word against *Regularity*, (*i. e.* *Regularity in general*) and that what he hath said relates only to that *particular Sort of Regularity*, which supposes it necessary that the *Ministerial Power* should have been handed down from Man to Man, by an *uninterrupted Succession* from the Apostles : And yet in the very same Breath, as it were, he tells his Reader that he is ready to call even *Regularity*, *i. e.* *every Sort or Kind of Regularity*, a *Nicety*, and a *Trifle*, if any one be disposed to provoke him to it, *i. e.* if any one shall take a Fancy to maintain that it is *absolutely necessary* to the Salvation of Christians ! So far therefore as I can perceive, the *Committee*, according to his Lordship's own Account of himself, were only unhappy in this, that they could not look into his Lordship's Heart : For setting this aside, they would not have been so very much out of the way, if they had charged him with throwing Contempt upon *Regularity in any Sense*; unless his Lordship will shew me what real Difference there is between calling any thing a *Nicety*, and a *Trifle* ; and being ready to call it so upon a proper Occasion.

But to return ; It may be thought perhaps, that when his Lordship says that an *uninterrupted Succession, made necessary, or considered as made necessary* to the Favour of God, is a *Trifle*, and a *Nicety*, &c. his Meaning is, not that an *uninterrupted Succession itself* is a *Trifle* and a *Nicety*, but that the making such a Succession *absolutely necessary* to the Favour of God, is a *Trifle*, and a *Nicety*, &c. This indeed brings his Lordship's Plea to some sound Sense ; and tho' the Words are not fairly capable of such a Construction, his Lordship I perceive is very willing that they should be thus understood. This I gather from hence, that his Lordship has taken some Pains to possess his Readers

ders with an Opinion, that the only thing which he had opposed in his *Preservative*, was the *laying too much Stress* upon an *uninterrupted Succession*, i. e. the making such a Succession absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Christians. (g) *Whether* (says he) *this be to throw Contempt upon a Matter, TO LAY NO MORE STRESS upon it than it can bear; or whether it be not a much more effectual Method of throwing Contempt upon it, to be always treating Matters of*——*REGULARITY, as Matters of ESSENCE, and of ABSOLUTE NECESSITY to Salvation, and TO PUT MEN'S ETERNAL HAPPINESS upon an UNINTERRUPTED Succession.*——Others must judge for themselves. These Words, I say, are a very plain Insinuation, that the only Reason he had given the Committee to charge him with having thrown Contempt upon a regular, i. e. an uninterrupted Succession, was his having pleaded against putting Men's eternal Happiness upon an uninterrupted Succession, or the making such a Succession absolutely necessary to Salvation. The Question therefore now is, whether this be the true State of the Case or not: and this will very quickly be resolved by reciting a few plain Passages, both out of his Lordship's *Preservative* and his Answer to the Representation, which take as follows.

When they (the Nonjurors) would allarm you——*by telling you, that you cannot hope for the Favour of God, but in the strictest Communion with their Church, which is*——*governed by Bishops in a REGULAR SUCCESSION; that God hath himself hung your Salvation upon THIS NICETY, &c.* *Preservat. p. 77.* Again: Tell them that in Fact there must have been frequent INTERRUPTIONS in the SUCCESSION of the Christian Clergy;——that you do not put

the Cause of the Reformation upon SUCH TRIFLES. Ibid. p. 88. Again; You cannot put either their or your own eternal Salvation upon their REGULAR ORDINATION, and UNBROKEN SUCCESSION from the Apostles; because this would be to put it upon THE INVENTION OF MEN. Ibid. Once more: You——ought——not to be afraid of——the VAIN WORDS of REGULAR and UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSIONS—Nullity or Validity of God's Ordinances to the People, upon account of NICETIES and TRIFLES, or any other the like DREAMS. Ibid. p. 98. There needs no Comment upon these Passages to show, that what his Lordship calls a Trifle, a Nicety, vain Words, &c. is not the making an uninterrupted Succession absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Christians, but an uninterrupted Succession in self. If now you look into his Answer to the Representation, you will find it there treated in the same decent manner. The laying such a Stress upon what can never be proved (i. e. the making an uninterrupted Succession absolutely necessary to Salvation)——I call laying a Stress upon what is truly, with respect to the Terms of Salvation, A TRIFLE; what is truly A NICETY——upon the DREAMS and INVENTIONS of Men, p. 90.

If then to say that an uninterrupted Succession is a Trifle, a Nicety, vain Words, a Dream, and an Invention of Men, be to throw Contempt upon it, his Lordship you see has thrown Contempt upon it. And indeed, setting all this aside, he hath said enough to shew how little a thing it is in his Eyes. In his Preservative he tells us that the Gospel lays NO Stress upon this Matter, p. 88. In his Answer to the Representation he affirms, that our Saviour never laid ANY Weight upon it, with respect to the future Estate of his Subjects, p. 90. In his Preservative again we have it, that God's Providence never yet IN FACT KEPT UP A

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REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION of right-ful Bishops, so far as we can judge of Things, p. 72. Nay, that it hath not pleased G O D to keep up any Proof of the least PROBABILITY or MORAL POSSIBILITY of a REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION; but that there is a GREAT APPEARANCE, and humanly speaking a CERTAINTY of the CONTRARY. That this REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION of Persons qualified and REGULARLY ORDAINED, is a Matter IMPOSSIBLE TO BE PROVED; nay, that THE CONTRARY is MORE THAN PROBABLE upon all historical Evidence which we receive in other Cases, p. 78, 79. To the same purpose in his Answer to the Representation: A REGULAR UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION, says he, is what CAN NEVER BE PROVED. It is that of which the most learned must have the least Assurance, and the unlearned can have NO NOTION but thro' IGNORANCE and CREDULITY, p. 91. If this be not throwing Contempt upon an uninterrupted Succession, I must confess I understand not what Contempt means; and therefore I was surprized to find his Lordship endeavouring to evade this Charge, which lay so full against him, which in effect he had, in his Answer to the Representation, own'd at other times, even in the same Paragraph; and what should tempt his Lordship to it, I am not able to imagine, unless it were that he might make room for a Variety of Answers, according to the different Sentiments of his Admirers. But Decency forbids me to pass those Reflections which his Lordship's Conduct in this Particular would naturally suggest to me. I shall therefore leave this Matter to be considered by his Lordship, and I heartily wish he may be able to give a better Account of it to his own Conscience, than I am able to give of it to the World.

Hitherto we have only been trying a bare Matter of Fact, viz. whether his Lordship is guilty

guilty of that which the *Committee* has charged him with. And tho', the *Design* of these Papers carrying me no farther than to vindicate the *Representation*, I might here fairly take my Leave of this Subject; yet since perhaps it may be thought but a fruitless Piece of Work to have made good a Charge against his Lordship, without making it appear that there is any thing culpable in the Matter of that Charge, I shall therefore spend a few Pages in shewing how this Controversy affects the Cause of Religion, and what his Lordship in consequence of his Doctrine must be obliged to maintain.

In the Controversy then there are these two Questions which naturally offer themselves, viz.
 1. Whether there be any *Rule*, according to which the *Ministerial Office* ought of *Right*, i. e. according to the *Will* or *Appointment* of God, to be conveyed. 2. What that *Rule* is. As to the first of these, it must of necessity be resolved in the Affirmative, unless you will destroy all manner of Difference or Distinction between *Ministers* and *People*. The Word *Office* carries with it the Idea of *Power* lodged in *some*, which is not lodged in others. But such a Power there cannot be, if there be no *Rule* by which that Power is to be conveyed. If then there be a Distinction between *Ministers* and *People*; if every Christian ought not to take upon himself the publick Preaching of the Word and Administration of the Sacraments, there must of necessity be *something*, in virtue whereof this Right may be vested in particular Persons, or which is all one, there must be some *Rule* by which the *Ministerial Office* is to be conveyed. And this indeed his Lordship plainly supposes: For he supposes that there is such a thing as *Regularity* in the Succession of *Ministers*, i. e. he supposes that there is *some Rule* by

by which the Succession of Ministers ought to proceed according to the Will or Appointment of God.

The only Question therefore to be decided is, what this Rule is? The current Doctrine has been, that as Christ appointed his Apostles by an *immediate* Commission, so the Apostles likewise by an *immediate* Commission did appoint others, whom they intrusted with a Power of appointing others after them, and that thus the Ministerial Office has been handed down from Man to Man successively throughout all Ages. According to this Doctrine then, they only are rightly entitled to the Ministerial Office, who are called and appointed thereunto by *some particular Person or Persons, who have received a Commission to make such Appointments thro' a continued or uninterrupted Succession of Men, beginning in the Apostles.* And this for my own part I take to be the Truth of the Case.

But his Lordship you see maintains, that such an *uninterrupted Succession* as this *has not in Fact been kept up*, and therefore he pleads for *another Rule.* What this Rule is, tho' it very highly concerns every Reader to know, his Lordship has not yet thought fit to inform us. All he says is, that *Regularity may be preserved without the Supposition of a Succession absolutely uninterrupted from the beginning*; but *how* this can be, is not any where so much as hinted at. But certainly, had his Lordship had any regard either to the *Consciences or common Sense* of those, to whom he *appealed* in his *Preservative*, he would have been very plain in this Particular. For to tell Men that an *uninterrupted Succession* from the Apostles is a *Dream*, and an *Invention*, and not so much as to endeavour to satisfy them how the Ministerial Power can rightfully be conveyed with-

without the Supposition of such a *Succession*, what is it but to let them loose to their own Imaginations, and leave them to frame Notions of *Regularity* for themselves? Of *Regularity* did I say? I will say yet more. His Lordship never so much as once, till now in his *Answer* to the *Representation*, told us that he thought that *Regularity* might be preserved without the Supposition of an *uninterrupted Succession*; and therefore by running down an *uninterrupted Succession*, or (as he has generally expressed himself in his *Preservative*) a *regular uninterrupted Succession*, he has not only left his Readers at liberty to frame such Notions of *Regularity* as should please their own Fancies, but even given them too great a Handle to imagine, that in the *Succession* of the *Ministry* no *Regularity* was necessary to be observed at all, i. e. that every one was at liberty to take upon him that Office, who should find himself so disposed. This might before have been taken notice of to the Advantage of the *Committee*, who cannot in any reason be blamed for not making a *Distinction* in their *Charge*, which not only (as I presume) they knew nothing of, but which even his Lordship himself had as yet never made. However it shews how much the Church of God is obliged to his Lordship for this his excellent *Appeal* to the *Christian Laity*, in which so wide a Gap is opened to the *Contempt* of a *regular Ministry*, and by consequence to *Disorder* and *Confusion*. — But I perceive 'tis not so pleasant a Task to his Lordship to *build up*, as it is to *pull down* and *destroy*: And I wish that there were no reason to observe in this and in other Instances, that his Lordship, after all his mighty Endeavours to overturn *old* and *settled Principles*, has given us in the room of them *nothing*, or that which is worse than nothing.

But

But it is, I think, no hard Matter to guess why his Lordship chose to be silent in this Particular. For had he declared himself openly and plainly, he must have advanced such Notions as very few would have been able to digest. No one, I suppose, wants to be informed, that how near soever his Lordship may have approached to the *Quakers* in some Particulars, he does not at all agree with them in this, *viz.* that Men are in these Days called to the Work of the Ministry *immediately by the Spirit*. Now seeing he flatly denies that an *uninterrupted Succession* has in Fact been kept up, and ridicules those who shall dream of founding any Claim to execute the Office of a Minister upon Supposition of such a *Succession*; what Rules, can you imagine, will his Lordship find out for the Conveyance of the *Ministerial Power*? To me, I confess, there seem to be but two Things possible, *viz.* To suppose either 1st. That God has lodged in every particular Congregation of *Christians* a Power to appoint and ordain its own Ministers: Or 2^{dly}, That he hath lodged this Power in the *Civil Magistrate*. To assert the one, is downright *Independency*: To maintain the other, is the Doctrine of *Erastus*. His Lordship may chuse which he pleases; but were it not too great a Presumption in me to offer my Sentiments, I would advise him to the latter; for 'tis just, I think, as well as consistent, that he should give to the *Civil Magistrate* the Power of conveying holy Orders, since he has in effect already given him the Power of taking them away.

I would not be understood as if I thought that Doctrines are either to stand or fall according to the Opinion Men have of those who espouse them. No; Truth is Truth, whoever speaks it; and therefore if either the *Independents* be right,

or the *Eraſtians* be right, in God's Name let them be heard, let them prevail. But this I will venture to ſay, that there is not ſo much as one ſingle Proof to be found in Scripture, by which it can be concluded, that God has given either to the *Civil Magiſtrate*, or to any Number or Congregation of *Chriſtians*, the Power of conſerring holy Orders; nor any Rule there laid down for the Conveyance of the *Minifterial Office*, than what ſuppoſes the Neceſſity of an *uninterrupted Succeſſion* from the Apoſtles. If his Lordſhip thinks otherwiſe, 'tis but fair, 'tis but honeſt to declare his Opinion, and to produce his Reaſons.— But the Times, I ſuppoſe, are not yet ripe for this; and I truſt in God they never will be.

The Reader ſees then by this time, where this Controverſy with the Biſhop is like to end, viz. in this, whether there are any now in being, who are *regularly*, or according to the *Will* and *Appointment* of God, called to the *Ministry*? And it will be a neceſſary Conſequence of the Doctrines advanced by his Lordſhip, that there are none ſuch either upon the *Episcopal* or *Presbyterian* Scheme. For whoever they were, whether *Biſhops* or *Presbyters*, with whom the Apoſtles intruſted the *Power of Ordination*, this Power could only be conveyed down by a *continued* or *uninterrupted Succeſſion*, and therefore his Lordſhip, by denying that ſuch a *Succeſſion* has been kept up, has plainly denied the *very being* of ſuch a Power. But why, you'll ſay perhaps, do you tell me of Conſequences? If an *uninterrupted Succeſſion* has not in Fact been kept up, it has not been kept up, and this may and ought to be aſſerted, let the Conſequences of aſſerting it be what they will. Very true. But what has his Lordſhip done to ſhew that an *uninterrupted Succeſſion* has not been kept up? He has indeed aſſerted it about

twenty times over, and this (as far as I can see) is — ALL! How unkindly does his Lordship deal with the *Christian Laity*! He writes a *Preservative against the Principles and Practices of the Nonjurors*. In this Book he proposes nothing but *lasting Foundations, sure Retreats, resting Places, and the like*. When he comes to consider one Principle of the *Nonjurors* (which ought, I think, also to be a Principle of his Lordship) viz. that an *uninterrupted Succession* has been kept up, and that thro' this the *Ministerial Power* is derived down to us from Christ, he strongly denies the Principle; but then, instead of it, he gives them no other *resting Place, no surer Retreat, than his own bare Word*, and that tho' this Principle was treated by him as the main Hinge upon which the Controversy between us and the Nonjurors turns! But I must beseech his Lordship, if he thinks fit to persue this Point any farther, that he would give us better Satisfaction, that he would be pleased to name the *Time when and the Persons in whom that Succession, which began in the Apostles, ended*: a thing which it will certainly be very easy for him to do, if what he says be true, viz. that it is not only probable, but certain, that an *uninterrupted Succession* has not been kept, upon all historical Evidence which we receive in other Cases. When his Lordship will produce this Evidence, I promise him I will become his Proselyte. But until he has done this, 'tis Answer enough to say, that no such Evidence CAN be produced, and that, for any thing that appears to the contrary, an *uninterrupted Succession* HAS been kept up. For I think verily that a *bare Assertion* on one side of a Question, is at any time equivalent to a *bare Assertion* on the other.

But instead of endeavouring to *make good* his Assertion, his Lordship seems to think he has nothing to do but to call upon us to *overthrow* it, *i. e.* he thinks it to be his Business only to assert, and ours to prove, and that too in a Case of *Fact*, wherein, if we prove any thing, we must prove a *Negative*. He that says that an *uninterrupted Succession* from the Apostles *has not* been kept up, does thereby affirm, that the *Succession* which began in the Apostles *has been broken* or *destroyed*. His Lordship expects we should prove it *has not been* destroyed, *i. e.* he expects we should give him a List of all the *Bishops* and *Presbyters* that have ever been since the beginning of Christianity, and shew from whom they had their Ordination! How easy and modest is his Lordship in his Demands! But surely a reasonable Man would think that the Demand must be on the other side. For if the *Succession* which began in the Apostles *had been* destroyed, 'tis hardly to be conceived that History should afford no Instance or Instances, by which this might be made appear; and therefore if History affords no such Instances, this is a very good Proof that the *Succession has not* been destroyed. For my own part, I declare that 'tis the same thing with me, whether an *uninterrupted Succession* has been kept up, or whether by the best Evidence we can get it appears to have been kept up: And therefore I do not understand his Lordship when he says, that an *uninterrupted Succession* is a Matter *impossible to be proved*. Can the contrary be proved? If it can, let it be done; if not, the Dispute is at an end. His Lordship's Inability to maintain his Points will for ever supersede any Necessity upon us to maintain ours.

If any one thinks that want of *Baptism* administered by proper Hands, or any other *Personal* (and

(and perhaps *hidden*) *Defect* disannuls *Ordination*, and would thence argue against an *uninterrupted Succession*; I am not obliged to answer for such Fancies as those. Much less do I think my self obliged to maintain (in consequence of my pleading for an *uninterrupted Succession*) that such a *Succession* is of *absolute Necessity* in order to the Salvation of Christians, *i. e.* that the Ordinances of the Gospel, unless received from the Ministers of that *Succession*, are utterly inefficacious, or that all who do not adhere to the Ministers of that *Succession*, are in a State of Condemnation. I might, I presume without Offence, plead for the Use of the Two Sacraments, and yet I should think my self very much to blame, should I lay it down *universally*, that *none can possibly be saved without them*. That therefore which I contend for is this: that if (as I am verily persuaded) an *uninterrupted Succession* has been kept up, if this is the Way which God has appointed for the Conveyance of the *Ministerial Power*, then the Ministers of that *Succession* are the *only true and lawful* Ministers of Jesus Christ. And that therefore it is a Duty ordinarily incumbent upon Christians to follow these Ministers, and to receive the Ordinances of the Gospel from *their Hands*, and from *theirs only*. But then what Allowances God may make where this Duty is not performed, how far he will dispense with those who follow *another Ministry*, because 'tis the *only Ministry they can get* (which is the Case of many Protestants abroad) or with those, who tho' they have the Opportunity of joining themselves to these Ministers, yet *ignorantly* join themselves to others (which I hope is the Case of most Protestant Dissenters at home) this, I say, is a Point which I shall not undertake to determine, because I know of no Rule in the Gospel by which it can be determined. In

In short; the *Necessity* of following the Ministers of an *uninterrupted Succession*, which I plead for, is the *same*, and *no other*, than that which his Lordship himself must plead for, with respect to the Ministers of *that Succession* which *he* calls *Regular*. For whatever that *Succession* be, he must say that is a *Duty* incumbent upon Christians to adhere to that *Succession*; unless after all that his Lordship has said to show *his* Concern for *Regularity*, he will go on to teach the Christian People, that *they* are not obliged to have *any*, but that it is an *indifferent* Thing what Set or Order of Ministers they follow. But this Lordship, I presume, will not mainrain this: For tho' (as I have before observed) he seems in one Place very well disposed to call *his own Regularity* a *Nicety* and a *Trifle*; yet I am willing to hope that his Lordship was led to say this, by the *unnatural* way of speaking he had been forced upon in the Defence of a bad Cause, and not by any real and settled Intention of doing it: Because to say that there is such a Thing as *Regularity* in the *Succession* of the *Ministry*, i. e. that there is *some Rule*, by which, according to the *Will* or *Appointment* of God, Men ought to succeed one another in the *Ministry*; and at the same time to say that this *Regularity* is a *Nicety* and a *Trifle*, i. e. that it signifies nothing whether the People follow those *Ministers* who are thus regularly constituted, or follow others who are not so constituted; sounds the same to me as to say, that it signifies nothing in this Case, whether the People obey the Will of God, or obey it not. For certainly if it be the Will of God that *such* or *such* Persons should execute the *Ministerial Office*, it must be the Will of God that the People should follow *those Ministers*. However, if his Lordship should not see this Point in the same Light

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that I do, and will maintain that it is an *indifferent thing* to Christians, whether they follow *this* Order of Ministers, or whether they follow *another*; I can see but one Expedient for him, which is, to join with one who has lately professed himself his Lordship's great Admirer, I mean the worthy and sagacious Mr. Toland, in the Search after a *New Gospel*, for the *old one* (I will venture to say) will not serve the Turn.

I will mention but one thing more; which is, That there is *one* Sense in which an *uninterrupted Succession* may be said *not to have been kept up*, tho' perhaps not with more *Truth*, yet with somewhat more *Appearance* of it; and that is, when an *uninterrupted Succession* is spoken of, (not with respect to the *Ministerial Power*, but) with respect to those *Districts* or *Dioceses*, in which Persons *rightfully*, i. e. *validly ordained*, execute their Ministerial Functions: Between these two Sorts of *Regularity* there is a wide Difference; for the *former* is founded upon *Gospel Rules*, the latter upon the *Orders* and *Canons* of the Church. This therefore may properly be called a *canonical* Regularity, which is very often wanting where the other is, and may be dispensed with in many Cases where the other cannot. And this is the only Sort of *Regularity* which his Lordship had occasion to speak to in his Dispute with the *Nonjurors*, if he meant no more than to defend our established Church: For the Question between them and us, is not whether our Bishops have succeeded *rightfully to the Episcopal Power*, but whether they have succeeded *rightfully to those Sees* out of which the *Nonjuring* Bishops were excluded. Now if any one for this Reason should imagine, that this is *in Fact* the only *Regularity* which his Lordship has opposed, he will find himself mistaken. For 1st. The *uninterrupted Succession*

cession which his Lordship says *has not been kept up*, is a Succession to the Ministerial Office, as appears from his own express Words. (b) An uninterrupted Succession of Persons regularly ORDAINED, is a Matter impossible to be proved. 2dly, His Arguings against an uninterrupted Succession, show that he means a Succession to the Ministerial Power. (i) There is——humanely speaking, a Certainty——that this Succession hath been often interrupted, especially in the Opinion of those who maintain all LAY BAPTISMS, and all OFFICES perform'd by Persons who either have been irregularly ORDAINED, or have forged their Pretensions to ORDINATION, to be mere NULLITIES. 3. The Charge of the Committee is, that he hath thrown Contempt upon a regular Succession of the Ministry, i. e. to the Ministerial Power; and his Lordship in his Answer does not so much as pretend to alledge, that what he hath said about Successions, does not relate to Successions in that Sense. From all this, I say, it is evident that his Lordship hath opposed an *uninterrupted Succession*, as it relates to the Ministerial Office itself: I do not say he hath not opposed it in the other Sense also, for it is manifest he hath opposed it in both. Upon what Account indeed his Lordship should have opposed an *uninterrupted Succession* in either Sense, I do not for my Part so clearly apprehend. For whether an *uninterrupted Succession* in the first Sense has been kept up, is, as I said before, no Part of the Question between us and the Nonjurors. Nor need it be made any Part of the Question, whether it has been kept up in the Second. For admitting that an *uninterrupted Succession* be supposed to have been kept up till the Revolution, it will be a

(b) Prefervat. p. 79.

(i) Ibid. p. 78.

sufficient Answer to the *Nonjurors*, if it can be shown, either 1st. That *our Bishops* at the *Revolution* were regularly placed in those *Sees*, out of which the *Nonjuring Bishops* were excluded: Or 2^{dly}. That supposing that *our Bishops* were not regularly (*i. e.* canonically) placed in those *Sees*, yet that the Reasons for superseding the Canons in their Case, were such as sufficiently justified the Church in departing from a Rule of her own, and accepting those Bishops. Now the first of these his Lordship thinks he has made good beyond all Contradiction. (*k*) *The Civil Power*, says he,——had a Right to depose those Bishops who refused to give any Security of their Allegiance, and—to name others to succeed them——There is no Terror therefore from their Allarms, even upon THEIR OWN NOTIONS of REGULARITY and Schism; because these Bishops having been rightfully deposed, their Successors are the REGULAR Bishops. What could the *Nonjurors* wish less than this! Or what could the Church of *England* desire more, than to be justified even upon the Principles of the *Nonjurors* themselves! But his Lordship is always unmerciful in his Conquests, and generally as unhappy. His over forwardness spoils the *Justness*, and consequently, the Success of his Undertakings: So that whilst he is labouring to lay wide and strong Foundations for his own Security, he undermines the very Ground upon which he stands, till both he and his Adversaries sink down together in one common Ruin.

To conclude; for any thing that appears to me to the contrary, an *uninterrupted Succession*, even in this latter Sense, *has been kept up*. Not as if every *See* or *Diocese* has always been filled

(k) Ibid. p. 73.

with Persons regularly constituted Bishops: For *Intrusions* have happen'd in all Ages. But then I must beg leave to observe, that such *Intrusions* do not necessarily destroy the *Succession*: For 'tis possible that a regular *Succession* may be kept up in *Opposition* to the *irregular*; that the *latter* may in time cease, and give way to the *former*; or it self become regular by a *Cessation* of the *former*. If the Matter were thoroughly examined, I am of Opinion it would be found, that one or other of these has been the Case of all those Churches, where *Intrusions* have happen'd. If his Lordship thinks otherwise, let him produce his Instances, and they shall be considered. In the mean time let me ask his Lordship one Question; that forasmuch as he denies that an *uninterrupted Succession* of Persons to particular *Sees*, according to the *Orders* and *Canons* of the Church, has been kept up, what *Rule* will he now fix upon for the *Succession*? To say that there is no *Rule* according to which Men ought to succeed one another, is to make it an *indifferent thing* who succeeds, i. e. who the People join themselves to, as their proper Bishops, which is turning the whole Controversy between us and the *Nonjurors*, (so far I mean as Religion is concerned) into an arrant Jest. To say that the *Orders* and *Canons* of the Church are the *Rule*, and yet to affirm that the *Succession* according to that *Rule* is destroyed, is to make all Bishops equally *Intruders*. His Lordship therefore has but one Reserve that I can see, which is (as in the former Case) to have Recourse to the People, or to the Civil Magistrate; and say, that the *Right* of determining Matters of this Nature, is in him or them, exclusively of all those Rules and *Canons* of the Church, by which hitherto they have been directed; and consequently, that those are the regular and rightful Bishops, whom

he from time to time shall constitute over them; or whom *they* shall constitute over *themselves*. Now when his Lordship has fairly made out either of these Two Points, I will freely give up the Cause, and promise him never to trouble either him or my self about *Regularities* more.

III.

From the *Succession* of the *Ministry*, it will be proper to proceed to the *Regard* due to those who are the Ministers of Jesus Christ lawfully set over us. The *Committee* having charged his Lordship with denying all Authority to the Church, *i. e.* to the Ministers of Jesus Christ; and having produced several Passages out of his *Sermon*, by which (as they supposed) this Charge was made good; go on to observe, That (1) *these Doctrines* (*i. e.* the Assertions contained in those Passages) naturally tend to breed in the Minds of the People a *Disregard* to those who are appointed to rule over them, *i. e.* to their Ministers. This Observation is so very just and natural, that I should not so much as have taken Notice of it, had it not been for the sake of that which follows, in remarking upon which, his Lordship hath in his *Answer* done great Wrong to the *Committee*. The Words of the *Representation* are these:

“ Whether his Lordship had this View, the following Passages will declare. Page 25. The Church of Christ is the Number of Persons who are sincerely and willingly Subjects to him as Law-giver and Judge, in all Matters relating to Conscience or eternal Salvation: And the MORE CLOSE and IMMEDIATE this REGARD to him is, the more certainly, and the more evidently true it is, that

“ they are of his Kingdom. And Pag. 31. If Christ
 “ be our King, let us show our selves Subjects to
 “ him alone in the great Affair of Conscience and
 “ eternal Salvation; and WITHOUT FEAR OF
 “ MEN’S JUDGMENT, live and act as becomes those
 “ who wait for the Appearance of an all-knowing
 “ and impartial Judge, even that King whose
 “ Kingdom is not of this World.

These Passages, you see, are brought by the Committee, to prove that his Lordship’s View was the same with the Tendency of his Doctrines, i. e. that it was his Design and Intention to breed in the Minds of the People a Disregard to those who are appointed to rule over them, because (as the Committee conceived) his Lordship had in these Passages, in a more direct manner, taught Men not to regard them. What the particular Expressions are, by which the Committee were led to conceive thus much, no Man can fail of discerning by the very Force of the Passages themselves: But they are distinctly pointed out to us by the Reverend the Dean of Chichester, in his Answer to a Letter, p. 61, 62. where in effect he tells his Lordship, that it will be inconsistent for him to exhort Men to pay any Regard to their Spiritual Teachers and Pastors, after declaring that the MORE CLOSE AND IMMEDIATE their Regard is to Christ, the more evidently true it is that they are of his Kingdom; or to teach Men to reverence those who are over them in the Lord, after having exhorted them to show themselves Subjects to Christ alone, in the Affair of Salvation——WITHOUT FEAR OF MEN’S JUDGMENT.

You see here plainly what the Expressions are, upon which the Stress of the Charge lies. Wherefore having thus cleared the Meaning of the Observation, we will next consider the Justice of it. I begin with the first Passage, wherein his Lordship

ship hath declared, that *the more close and immediate Men's Regard to Christ is, the more certainly, and the more evidently true it is, that they are of his Kingdom.* The Sense of which will very quickly appear, by considering the Words immediately going before. *The Church of Christ (says his Lordship) is the Number of Persons, who are sincerely and willingly subject to him as Lawgiver and Judge, &c. And the more close and immediate this Regard (i. e. this Regard to Christ as Lawgiver and Judge) is, the more certainly, and the more evidently true it is, that they are of his Kingdom.* His Lordship here then plainly asserts, that Christ is to be regarded as *Lawgiver and Judge*, by a *close and immediate Regard ONLY*; or that he is not AT ALL to be regarded as *Lawgiver and Judge*, *mediately or remotely*: For if by how much the more *close and immediate* our Regard to Christ as *Lawgiver and Judge*, is, by so much the more evident it is, that we are of his Kingdom; it is manifest that he who does at all regard Christ as *Lawgiver and Judge*, *mediately or remotely*, does not show himself to be of the Kingdom of Christ so evidently, as he who regards him by a *close and immediate Regard only*. The only Question therefore is, what it is to regard Christ as *Lawgiver and Judge*, *closely and immediately*, and what to regard him *mediately or remotely*. Now to regard Christ *closely and immediately*, is to regard Christ *himself*, i. e. without the Interposition of any *Medium*: To regard him *mediately or remotely*, is to regard him *by regarding another*. To regard Christ therefore as *Lawgiver and Judge*, *closely and immediately*, can signify nothing else than to regard *those Laws* which are *enacted*, and *those Decisions* which are *made and pronounced by him immediately*; and consequently, to regard Christ as *Lawgiver and Judge*, *mediately or remotely*, can signify nothing else

else than to regard *those Laws which are enacted, and those Decisions which are made or pronounced by Persons vested with Authority from him.*

Since then his Lordship has declared, that Christ is not *at all* to be regarded as *Lawgiver* and *Judge mediately or remotely*, the full Sense of the Passage must necessarily be this, *viz.* that no Regard is to be paid to *any* (and consequently not to the *Ministers of Christ*) as *Lawgivers* or *Judges* in the Matters here spoken of, *i. e.* in *Matters of Conscience or Religion*. For if the *Ministers of Christ* were to be regarded as *Lawgivers* or *Judges*, they must be regarded as *Lawgivers* and *Judges under Christ*; their *Laws* and their *Decisions* must be received on Account of the *Authority* reposed in them by Christ, and consequently Christ (upon this Supposition) would be regarded as *Lawgiver* and *Judge mediately or remotely*. And who can doubt whether his Lordship intended to say thus much, who considers how often he has pronounced Christ to be the *sole Lawgiver* and *Judge* in *Matters of Religion*, or whether it be not a necessary Consequence of his maintaining, that there is in the Church *no visible Human Authority*? The only thing therefore now to be done in order to justify the *Committee* in this Observation, is to shew that they have here charged him with teaching, that no Regard ought to be paid to the *Ministers of Christ* in the *same Sense*, and in *no other* than this. And this, I think, is very obvious. For, 1. The *Ministers of Christ* are expressed by *those who are appointed to rule over the People*, which shews manifestly that the *Committee* were considering those *Ministers* under the Notion of *Rulers*, *i. e.* of *Lawgivers* and *Judges*. 2. This Part of the Charge is expressly founded upon certain *Doctrines* taught by his Lordship, and set down in
the

the foregoing Part of the *Representation*. *These Doctrines* (say they) *naturally tend to breed in the Minds of Men a Disregard, &c.* Now what these Doctrines are, you cannot fail of understanding by the Passages themselves, which are all of them produced to shew, that his Lordship hath denied all Authority of *Legislation* and *Judging* in the Church of Christ.

When therefore the *Committee* say, that his Lordship's Intention was the same with the Tendency of his Doctrines, *viz.* to teach, that *no Regard* ought to be paid to the *Ministers of Christ*, they could not possibly mean any thing more, than that his Intention was to teach that they are not to be at all regarded *under the Notion of Lawgivers or Judges*. And I hope I have made it evident that his Lordship has asserted as much in the very Passage produced by the *Committee*.

But how then does his Lordship answer the *Representation*? How? Why, I will tell you. He first of all states the Sense of the *Committee* unfairly, and then takes occasion to load them with his *Compassion*. His Charge upon the *Committee* is, that (u) *their Aim is to obtain such a Regard to themselves, as is INCONSISTENT WITH a CLOSE and IMMEDIATE Regard to Christ*. Hereupon arises *Surprize, Astonishment, and great Lamentation*, that the *Clergy* should take it as an *Injury to their Order*, that the *Christian People* are encouraged to shew themselves *Subjects of Christ*: that they should so far mistake the End of their Calling, as to think that their Business is to *preach*, not *Jesus Christ*, but *themselves*, to make *Men Disciples*, not of *Jesus Christ*, but of *themselves*! Thus

(u) *Answ. to the Repres. Chap. 1. Sect. 11. p. 58, 59.*

his Lordship is pleased to represent the State of the Controversy, and under this Notion he has, in the great Anguish and Bitterness of his Heart, spent one long mournful *Section*! But let his Lordship now assign the Ground of this vile, this detestable Imputation! Do the *Committee* say, or can it be justly inferred from any thing that they have said, that *their Aim is to obtain such a Regard to themselves, as is INCONSISTENT WITH a close and immediate Regard to Christ*? Shew this, I say, my Lord, and shew it very plainly too, or else reserve your *Tears* for a better Purpose. But how should his Lordship shew that which no where in Nature is to be found? The *Committee* blame his Lordship for teaching that *Christ* is to be regarded by a *close and immediate Regard ONLY*. Hence he infers it to be the Sense of the *Committee*, that *Christ* ought NOT AT ALL to be regarded *closely and immediately*! But is there no *Medium* between these two *Extremes*? If *Christ* is to be regarded by a *close Regard*, may he not be regarded *remotely* too? Or if he is to be regarded *immediately*, or by *himself*, is it *inconsistent* to suppose that he ought to be regarded *mediately*, or by *his Ministers* also? When his Lordship has made it out that these Things are contradictory, I will freely subscribe to his Opinion, and say with him, that the *Committee* have indeed pleaded for such a Regard to themselves, as is *inconsistent with a close and immediate Regard to Christ*. But since every one knows that this is impossible to be made out, they need not, I suppose, be told how *inconsistent* this *Accusation* is with a *Regard*, I will not say to *Christ* and his *Gospel*, but even to the common *Laws of Humanity* which *Nature* teaches.

The Case, in short, I take to be this. The Ministers of *Christ* have Authority to enjoin
such

such Things for outward Order and Decency in Religion, as are not contrary to the settled and standing Laws of the Gospel, tho' they be not particularly commanded in the Gospel. Now when any one obeys these settled and standing Laws, and will not be prevailed upon to transgress them, for the sake of complying with such Laws as are appointed by the Ministers of Christ for Order and Decency, he thereby pays a *close and immediate Regard to Christ*. And when any one complies with such Laws appointed for Order and Decency, as he finds *not to be contrary* to those settled and standing Laws, he then pays a *Regard to the Ministers of Christ*; and by so doing, *remotely or indirectly*, he regards *Christ* too; because he regards them for the Sake of Christ; or upon the Account of that Trust and Authority which Christ hath reposed in them. And thus Christ is regarded both *mediately and immediately*, both *closely and remotely*, both *by himself* and by *his Ministers*, i. e. he is regarded after such a manner as he ought to be regarded.

But how unjust soever the transferring the State of the Question after this manner be to the Committee, it was certainly very much for his Lordship's Ease. For besides that otherwise he would have had very little to have said in Defence of himself; he would have lost an Opportunity of declaiming against *absolute Authority*, a Topick, with respect to which altho' his Lordship hath no Adversaries among us, yet he delights, I perceive, perpetually to dwell upon. Had his Lordship represented to his Readers fairly, and as he ought, or had he not by his unnatural Comments, as it were, precluded them from considering, what is obvious enough of it self, *viz.* that there may be a *mediate Regard* paid to Christ very consistently with regarding

him *closely and immediately*, they would then ve-
 ry readily have understood, that the Design of
 the Committee was not to plead for the *one exclu-*
sive of the other, but for a due Conjunction of
both together. And then how many fine Strokes
 had been lost! How little to the Purpose would
 it have been for his Lordship to have cited St.
Peter condemning in all spiritual Pastors the beha-
ving themselves as being Lords over God's Heri-
tage! How little, to have insisted upon the Ne-
 cessity Men lie under of *comparing the Doctrines of*
Men with the Declarations of Christ, and of not
throwing off the Respect due to their great and infal-
lible Master, under pretence of paying Respect to fal-
lible Teachers! How little, to have argu'd against
 such a Regard to others as is founded upon the Igno-
 miny of our Nature, as is in its beginning infamous
 to all the Faculties we boast of, and which ends in
 the Ignorance and Stupidity both of Teachers and
 People, and in the Slavery and Destruction of whole
 Nations! All these Things, and more of the
 same sort, which have swelled this Section up in-
 to so large a Size, had, I say, been entirely lost,
 had the Case been fairly and truly stated. And
 what his Lordship perhaps would have lamented
 more than this is, that he would then have found
 no room for a learned Criticism of about three
 Pages long, upon the Sense of the Words *Κυριόβο-*
υτες and *ἡγεμενοι*, with which why he should have
 troubled either himself or his Readers, I cannot
 for my part imagine, unless it were that he
 might the more effectually improve the Oppor-
 tunity he had given himself of insinuating base
 Things of the Committee. The Committee had
 said that his Lordship's Doctrine tended to breed
 in the Minds of the People a Disregard to those
who are appointed to rule over them. To this his
 Lordship's first Answer is, *That the Phrase to—*
 rule

rule over them — in the Original — signifies, &c. — Let it signify what it will. This is no Part of the Question. The Committee did not use this Phrase with an Intention hereby to determine the Extent of Church Power, but only as a Scripture Phrase familiarly applied to the Ministers of Jesus Christ. That the Ministers of Jesus Christ have *some* Authority over the Flock, I think verily is implied under this Phrase, and I believe the Committee think so too; but then this was never argued by them directly from this Phrase, but all along supposed and taken for granted; and therefore his Lordship might as pertinently have given us the Sense of the Word *τὸν* as of *ἡγούμενοι*. But let us hear a little of his Comment. The Word *ἡγούμενοι* then signifies Guides or Leaders. — And therefore RULING in this Sense is as an under Shepherd rules his Master's Sheep. He proceeds, and says a little after; But here the Figure of Speech must not be carried too far. Christ's Sheep are not to be debased into the State of Animals so called — They are to be led, and not driven. They are to be led to the Food prepared for them by Christ, and not driven to rank and unwholsome Weeds instead of it. They are to be led to their own true Interest and Happiness, and not to be driven to Market or to Slaughter at the Will of their Keepers, nor to be shorn and fleeced whenever the Pleasure or Profit of their Shepherds so called shall invite or require it. I must beseech his Lordship to consider who it is he is disputing against! He is disputing, I think, against the Committee, and therefore either all that he says is nothing to the Purpose, or they must be those who are for driving the Sheep of Christ to unwholsome Weeds, to Market, to Slaughter! They likewise must be the Shepherds who are for fleecing and shearing the Flock, whenever either their

Pleasure or their Profit shall invite or require! But for God's Sake, my Lord, what have the *Committee* said or done to deserve this Treatment at your Hands! Are they any of them *Inquisitors*, either in Doctrine or in Practice? Do they oppress their Flocks by Extortion? Or have they *Parishes* to take care of, which they *never* come at? No; but your Lordship — says that they plead for *such* a Regard to themselves as is inconsistent with a close and immediate Regard to Christ. Prove, prove this, my Lord, and then call them *Drovers*, *Butchers*, *Fleecers*, or any thing else that you shall think fit. But if you have not proved, if you cannot prove this, acknowledge your self their *Debtor*; and tho' you may think it too great a Condescension to ask Forgiveness at their Hands, think it not beneath you to ask it at the Hands of one who is greater than they.

His Lordship has given us some reason to expect that he will find an Opportunity of examining distinctly every Text in the New Testament relating in any sort to this Subject; when he shall think it seasonable so to do, it may then also perhaps be thought necessary for Some-body to examine them along with him, and to shew what may or may not be concluded from them with respect to Church Authority. The only Purpose I had in taking this Notice of what his Lordship hath now observed, was to let you see that his Lordship, when he is disposed to reflect upon his Adversaries, will not always stay for a Reason.

Wherefore having thus dispatch'd what I have to remark concerning the first of the two Passages mentioned in the Observation above, I proceed to the second, in which his Lordship hath taught, that it is the Duty of Christians to live and act without Fear of Man's Judgment. Upon this there is very little needful to be said, be-
cause

cause his Lordship hath said but little. The Sum of it is in these Words: (z) *That it should be expected of a Man who lives and acts as a true Christian, and who therefore cannot but be acceptable to his great Master, that he should be afraid of Man's Judgment; methinks is to teach Men not to be content with the greatest of all Comforts, and of all Supports, the Assurance of the Love and Favour of God.* His Lordship did well to introduce this Observation with a *methinks*, hereby to let us know that it was only a Conjecture of his own, for which he had no certain Foundation. The Committee, I dare aver for them, intended to teach no such thing; but this I believe they did intend to teach, that altho' the Assurance of the Love and Favour of God is indeed the greatest of all Comforts, and that which must abundantly serve to every Man's Content and Satisfaction, yet that *Man's Judgment, i. e. Human Excommunication*, is not therefore wholly to be despised and set at naught. And who can doubt whether it was his Lordship's Intention in this very Passage to teach the contrary, when he has himself every where treated *Human Excommunications* with Contempt and Ridicule; when he has found no better Names for them than *Human Engines, Outcries of Human Terror, and vain Words*? His Lordship indeed has been pleased to tell us, that (a) he has only spoken against *Human Sentences as made absolutely necessary to the Salvation of Christians (i. e. as I suppose his Lordship means, considered as made to affect the Eternal Salvation of Christians)* and that in his Answer to the Representation he has shewn that he agrees with the last declared Thoughts of the Dean

(z) Ibid. p. 66. (a) Answer to a late Book, &c. p. 28, 29.

of Chichester upon the Sense and true Use of Excommunication. But I have sufficiently shewn (b) elsewhere, that there is no Agreement between his Lordship and the Dean upon this Point, and whoever will be at the Pains of looking into the *Preservative*, will find it as plain as Words can make it, that they are Human Excommunications indefinitely which his Lordship calls *Human Engines*, *Outcries of Human Terror*, and *vain Words*. How indeed should it be otherwise, when his Lordship denies that there is any such thing as a Right of judging authoritatively in the Church of Christ? — But if Human Excommunications do not affect a Man's State with respect to the Favour of God, what *Regard*, you'll say, can be due to them; or why ought Men to be afraid of them? I answer, that Men ought certainly to pay *thus much* Regard to them, and *thus far* to be afraid of them, as to endeavour by all honest and prudent Means to avoid them, and that even tho' they should not really deserve them. For besides that it argues a Contempt of their Superiors, it shews also that Men make very light of the Ordinances of the Gospel, when they rashly and presumptuously incur those Censures, by which they are excluded from the Use and Benefit of them. Were I sensible that the Committee pleaded for any greater Fear or Regard than this, I should be very far from undertaking to vindicate them. But if this be all that they contend for, and if his Lordship denies even this (which he certainly does, if he teaches that Human Excommunications ought to be despised) I hope the Justice of their Censure will not any longer be disputed.

(b) See the *Defence of the first Head*, &c. Chap. 4. p. 56.

IV.

The Committee having shewn that his Lordship had taken away from the Church *all* Authority of *Legislation* and *Judging*, proceed farther to make some Remarks upon his *Description* of A CHURCH, which, say they, *doth well agree to these Doctrines*. The Description is this: That it is the Number of Men, whether small or great, whether dispersed or united, who truly and sincerely are Subjects to Jesus Christ alone, as their Lawgiver and Judge, in Matters relating to the Favour of God and their Eternal Salvation. His Lordship here rightly observes, that this was intended as a Description (c) not of A Church, *i. e.* of a particular Church (as the Committee seem here to have represented it) but of THE Church, *i. e.* of the universal Church. But this Observation is of no great Weight, because (however it happened that the Committee spoke of A Church in this place) it is plain that every where else in this Observation they speak not of A Church, but of THE Church, and consequently that they understood, and have opposed his Lordship, as describing the universal Church. The great Fault which the Committee found with this Description, you may learn from these Passages. "We presume, say they, his Lordship could not be ignorant of the 19th Article of our Church, intituled, *Of the Church, viz. The visible Church of Christ is a Congregation of faithful Men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly administer'd according to Christ's Ordinance, in all things that are of neces-*

(c) Answ. to the Repres. Chap. 1. Sect. 12. p. 70.

" *sity requisite to the same.* Tho' in Disparage-
 " *ment of this Article, by himself solemnly and*
 " *often acknowledged, he asserts, p. 10. that the*
 " *Notion of the Church hath been so diversified by*
 " *the various Alterations it hath undergone, that it*
 " *is almost impossible so much as to number up the*
 " *many inconsistent Images that have come by daily*
 " *Additions to be united together in it."* That these
 Words were spoken in Disparagement of, or in
 Contradiction to, the 19th Article, the Committee
 seem to have inferr'd from hence, *viz.* That his
 Lordship having undertaken to give a Descripti-
 on of the Church of Christ, he must be supposed
 to have put into that Description every thing
 that (in his Opinion) ought to be put in; and
 consequently that whatever Things have been
 mentioned by others in describing the Church,
 which are *not* mentioned by his Lordship, must
 be those *Additions* which his Lordship complains
 of. Now it is manifest that the *Article* menti-
 ons more Particulars as essential to the Notion
 of the Church, than are mentioned in his Lord-
 ship's Description. For the *Article* mentions it as
 necessary that *the pure Word of God be preached,*
 and *the Sacraments duly administred,* both which
 Particulars in his Lordship's Description are en-
 tirely left out. That this was the Sense of the
 Committee, appears plainly from the following
 Words. " We wish, say they, that in his Lord-
 " ship's Account no Images necessary to form a
 " just and true Notion of the Church had been
 " left out; he omits even to mention the *preach-*
 " *ing the Word* or *administring the Sacraments,* one
 " of which, in the Words of the 27th Article of
 " our Church, is a Sign of Regeneration, or new
 " Birth, whereby, as by an Instrument, they that re-
 " ceive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church."
 So that his Lordship is here charged with having
 con-

contradicted two Articles of our Church, viz. the 19th, where *preaching the Word* and *administering the Sacraments* are expressly declared to be essential to the Notion of *the Church*; and the 27th, wherein one of these *Sacraments*, to wit, that of *Baptism*, is also declared to be *that whereby Men are ingrafted into the Church*.

The Justice of this Charge is so very obvious, that there would be little need to say any thing to shew it, were it not for the *Art* and *Contrivance* which his Lordship has made use of in the Defence of himself, which is so great, that it is not every Reader that will be able of himself to discover the Fallacy. Were it true indeed, what his Lordship has insinuated, viz. that (d) a Man's being a sincere Subject of Jesus Christ, did necessarily imply his Use of the Sacraments, &c. his Lordship's Description of *the Church*, and that given in the 19th Article, would amount to the same. But this is not true. For he is a sincere Subject of Jesus Christ, in his Lordship's Sense of that Phrase, who sincerely follows the Will of Christ as it appears to him in the Gospel. Unless therefore it can be affirmed, that it is impossible for a Man sincerely to reject the Sacraments, it cannot be true that a Man's being sincerely a Subject of Jesus Christ, does necessarily imply his Use of the Sacraments. I have debated this Point so fully with his Lordship in (e) another place, that 'tis needless to insist upon it any longer here. His Lordship indeed himself seems to have been sensible of the Weakness and Insufficiency of this Plea, and therefore he has provided us with

(d) Ibid. Sect. 14. p. 79. and Sect. 15. p. 81.

(e) See Remarks upon Sincerity.

another in case this should fail. The Plea is, that the 19th Article (f) defines — A PARTICULAR visible Church; whereas (g) he pretends to describe no other but THE UNIVERSAL invisible Church. I am here surprized and even astonished at his Lordship's Inconsistency! It was but just now that he had been wondring at the Committee for calling his Description a Description of A Church, i. e. of a particular Church, and not THE Church, i. e. the universal Church. And yet now, when he comes to explain the Article, he falls into the same Fault himself, and says it defines A Church, when the very Title of the Article, and the Article it self, shews that it defines not A Church, but THE Church! But his Lordship, I perceive, is not long of a Mind: for no sooner had he produced the Article, in order to compare it with his own Description, but he declares (the Truth it self extorting it from him) that (h) the Article speaks (not of A Church, but) of THE Church! A few Lines after he forgets himself again, and says, that the Article describes those outward Acts which are necessary to make (not THE Church, but) A Church! What shall one do with a Writer who runs backward and forward in such a manner as this! Every sober Reader must needs be sensible, without being led to it, that what this Article defines is not A PARTICULAR visible Church, but THE UNIVERSAL visible Church. THE VISIBLE Church of Christ, says the Article, is a Congregation of faithful Men, &c. This Word CONGREGATION his Lordship thinks fit to interpret as signifying a Number of Men actually met together, than which nothing can be more absurd and ridicu-

(f) Sect. 14. p. 78.

(g) Sect. 12. p. 70.

(h) Sect. 14. p. 78.

ious. For the Article *pretends* to define not *A* Church, but *THE* Church, as is plain. But if it *speaks* (as his Lordship says it does) of a CONGREGATION *actually met together*, it must then in reality define not *THE* Church, but *A* Church. Again, *The Church* is here defined by a *Congregation*, therefore there must be a *Congregation*, or there can be *no Church*. Consequently if by a *Congregation* you mean a Number of Men *actually met together*, you must say, that *without* a Number of Men *actually met together* there can be *no Church*, or in other Words, that a Number of Men cannot be *the Church* any longer than they are *actually met together*. By a *Congregation* therefore you must understand a *Body* or *Collection* of Men, whether met together or *not* met together. In this *latter* Sense his Lordship might have found the Word used, if he had but look'd to Can. 55. where the *Catholick Church of Christ* is explained by the whole CONGREGATION of *Christian People* *DISPERSED* throughout the whole *World*. So that the Sense of the Article is plainly this, that the *visible Church of Christ* is the WHOLE NUMBER or AGGREGATE of those faithful Men, among whom the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments are duly administred, &c. As this Interpretation puts no Force upon the Words, so it is the only one, so far as I can see, by which the Article can be made to speak consistently with it self.

The Article then having defined the *universal visible Church of Christ*, it is plain that if his Lordship meant to describe to us the *same Church*, the Article must be contradicted by his *Description*. But to save himself from this, his Lordship, as you have seen, further tells us, that he *pretends to describe no other but the universal* INVISIBLE Church. It is under this Cover that

the main Fallacy lies; and therefore that I may now set his Lordship's Notions in a clear Light, I must observe that the *invisible Church* is a Phrase no where to be found in Scripture, but invented by modern Divines, and used to signify those Members of the *visible Church*, who are inwardly and really what they outwardly profess themselves to be. If any Divines have used this Phrase in another Sense, I am not to answer for that; this I am certain of, that this is the only sound Sense in which it can be used, unless you'll say, either that there is no *universal visible Church*, or that there are two Sorts of *universal Churches*, the one *visible*, and the other *invisible*. But that the *invisible Church*, in this Sense, is not the Subject of his Lordship's Description, is manifest, 1st. From his Lordship's declared Design, which, he tells us, was to describe THE Church, i. e. the UNIVERSAL Church; or, as he expresses it, the (i) WHOLE KINGDOM of Christ. Whereas he who describes the *invisible Church*, in the Sense wherein that Phrase is now used, does not describe the *universal Church*, or the whole Kingdom of Christ, but only a Part of it. 2^{dly}, From the Nature of the Description itself, according to which, as is manifest, and I have (k) elsewhere shewn, a Man may be a Member of the *invisible Church*, who is no Member of the *visible* one. Whereas the very Notion of the *invisible Church*, in this Sense, implies, that a Man cannot be a Member thereof, unless he be first of all a Member of the *visible* one. His Lordship's Intention therefore appears to me plainly to have been this, viz. To describe the *universal Church* of Christ in such a manner, as to make it to be no *visible Society*. As a probable

(i) Ibid.

(k) Remarks upon Sincerity, p. 14.

Ground for this, I offer it to be considered, that his Lordship hath not so much as once throughout this whole Dispute, made any mention of an *universal visible Church*, tho' he had frequent Opportunities of doing it, which I conceive he would hardly have slipt, had he been perswaded that the Word CHURCH, when used in an *universal* Sense, does in the Scripture Language denote a *visible Society*. But his Lordship's own Words will make this Matter clear beyond Exception.

(l) *The Notion of the Church of Christ*, says he, AT FIRST was only the Number, small or great, of those who believed him to be the Messiah. His Lordship, I presume, will not deny that to be his Notion of the Church of Christ, which he apprehends was the Notion of it at first, i. e. which he apprehends to be the Scripture Notion of it. Now if the Notion of the Church be only the Number of those who believe Christ to be the Messiah, 'tis plain that the Notion of the Church does not imply a *visible Society*; because 'tis plain that a bare Belief in Jesus Christ as the Messiah, is not sufficient to gather Men into a *visible Society*. Agreeably to this Notion of the *universal Church*, his Lordship has expressly thrown out all outward Acts (in which outward Acts *visible Communion* does consist) as not essential, or in any wise belonging to it. (m) *Outward Acts*, says he—are necessary to make a *VISIBLE Church*. By a *visible Church* his Lordship plainly means a *particular Church*; and when he says that outward Acts are necessary to make a *visible Church*, his Meaning is, that they are necessary to that, and to that ONLY, i. e. that they are not at all necessary to constitute the *universal Church*. This is evident from ano-

(l) Serm. p. 10. (m) Answ. to the Represent. Ibid. p. 79.
ther

ther Passage of the same Sort, wherein his Lordship declares that (n) VISIBLE OUTWARD SIGNS, belong to a VISIBLE Church AS SUCH. These outward Signs, his Lordship (which is very remarkable) extends even to the Publick Profession of Christianity. For the Committee having charged him with omitting, preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments, he says, They might have added, he omits likewise the very PUBLICK PROFESSION of Christianity. And is not the Reason plain? Because I was not speaking of a VISIBLE Church, to which ALONE AS SUCH, visible outward Signs, or VERBAL PROFESSIONS belong; but of THE UNIVERSAL INVISIBLE Church.

I hope it will not now be any longer doubted, whether it was his Lordship's Intention to deny that the universal Church of Christ is a visible Society. But if any thing more be needful to be said upon this Point, it may be supplied from two other Passages which the Committee have found Fault with, and the Meaning of which we may now the better judge of. The Passages you will find in his Lordship's Sermon, Pag. 24, 25. where he tells us, that the grossest Mistakes in Judgment about the Nature of Christ's Kingdom or Church, have arisen from hence, that Men have argued from other visible Societies, and other visible Kingdoms of this World, to what ought to be visible and sensible in his Kingdom; and that we must not frame our Ideas from the Kingdoms of this World, of what ought to be in a visible and sensible manner in his (Christ's) Kingdom. If his Lordship had said no more than this, that we must not argue from every thing in the Kingdoms of this World, that the same must be visible in the Kingdom of

(n) Ibid, Sect. 15. p. 81.

Christ; the Truth of his Assertion, as it could not reasonably, so I conceive it would not have been disputed: For certain it is, that there are many things *visible* in Human Societies, which are *not visible* in the Church of Christ. Thus, for Instance, in all Human Societies there is, and must be, some one or more *visible Judge* or *Judges*, by whose *Sentence* all Controversies relating to the Laws of such Societies are *finally* to be determined. But in the Church of Christ the Case is not so; in this there are no *visible Judges*, to whose Determinations concerning the Laws of Christ, others are bound to submit; and therefore he who in this Case, or in any other of the like Sort, should argue from the one to the other, must certainly run himself into *very gross Mistakes*. But that which his Lordship seems plainly to have intended by these Passages, is this, That we ought not to argue *at all*, or to frame *any Ideas* from the Kingdoms of this World, to what ought to be *visible* in the Kingdom of Christ; which is not true, if it be true that the Church is a *visible Society*. For *some Ideas of visible things* there must be, which are common to all *visible Societies*, *i. e.* the Ideas of all those things which constitute the Nature and Essence of a *visible Society*. Wherefore, tho' I may not argue, that because there are *visible absolute Judges* or *Lawgivers* in the Kingdoms of this World; therefore there are also *visible absolute Judges* or *Lawgivers* in the Kingdom of Christ; yet I may, and must argue, that because there are in all the Kingdoms of this World certain *outward Laws* by which the Subjects of each Kingdom are *held together*, or by Vertue whereof they become a *visible Society*, therefore there must also be the same in the Kingdom of Christ,

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because else the Kingdom of Christ could not be what it is now supposed to be, a *visible Society*.

That the *Committee* understood his Lordship as speaking in this latter Sense, is plain from the following Words. *Against such Arguings from visible Societies and earthly Kingdoms, his Lordship saith, our Saviour has positively warned us; and yet the Scripture Representations of the Church, do plainly express its Resemblance to other Societies in many Respects; which implies, that in the Opinion of the Committee, his Lordship had taught that the Church resembles other Societies, i. e. visible or earthly Societies in no respect. And tho' his Lordship now tells us, that (o) the Church does resemble other Societies in many Points, and that he never said, or so much as thought the contrary; yet he very plainly shews that he does think the contrary, even at the same time that he is endeavouring to dissemble it. For what are these many Points in which the Church resembles other Societies? Why, according to his Lordship's own Account they are no other than these, that it has a King and a Judge over Subjects, i. e. in short, the Resemblance between the Church and other Societies or Kingdoms, is this, and this only, that they are all Societies, or all Kingdoms. But I beseech his Lordship, what is this to the Purpose? That the Church is a Society or a Kingdom (for you may call it which you please) is agreed between us; the Question is, what Resemblance this Kingdom or Society bears to other Kingdoms. To say therefore, as his Lordship hath in effect said, that this Kingdom bears no other Resemblance to other Kingdoms than that it is a Kingdom, is, if I know any thing, to*

(o) Ibid. Sect. 12. p. 72, 74.

say that it bears *no* Resemblance to other Kingdoms at all. But there is no need for me to insist upon this: For when the Committee say that the *Scripture Representations of the Church do plainly express its Resemblance to other Societies in many respects*, their Meaning is, that they express a *visible* Resemblance in many Respects. This is plain, because this was alledg'd against his Lordship's Assertion, that *we must not frame our Ideas from the Kingdoms of this World, of what ought to be in a VISIBLE and SENSIBLE manner in Christ's Kingdom*. That therefore which the Committee charge upon his Lordship is, that he hath taught that the Church doth not *visibly* resemble other Societies in any respect: And the Justice of this Charge is, I think, now very apparent. For,

1. If we may not argue at all from other Societies, to what ought to be *visible* in the Church of Christ, if there are *no* Ideas of *visible* things common to both; there is then no *visible* Resemblance between them.
- Again, 2. If, as his Lordship says, the Kingdom of Christ resembles other Kingdoms in no other respect than this, *viz.* That it has a King and a Judge over Subjects; this likewise destroys all *visible* Resemblance between the Church and other Kingdoms. For a King and a Judge over Subjects there may be; tho' the Subjects of that Kingdom be not held together by any outward and *visible* Laws; and consequently, tho' there be no *visible* Resemblance between that and other Kingdoms. And this must here be the Case: For if his Lordship says that the Subjects of Christ's Kingdom are, as such, held together by any outward *visible* Laws, the Kingdom of Christ does in that respect resemble other Kingdoms, and consequently, it will not be true to say that it resembles other Kingdoms in no other respect than this, *viz.* That it hath

a King and a Judge over Subjects. This then is his Lordship's Principle; that there is no *visible Resemblance or Likeness* between the Kingdom or *universal Church* of Christ, and other Kingdoms; which if it be true, it must then be a vain thing indeed to pretend to argue *at all* from what is *visible* in the one, to what ought to be *visible* in the other. And thus you see how his Lordship's Assertions clear up, and mutually support one another, and all end in the same general Conclusion, *viz.* That the **UNIVERSAL CHURCH** of Christ is NO VISIBLE SOCIETY.

And now Reader, these things being thus laid together, pray judge for your self, whether his Lordship hath not plainly contradicted the *Articles* of our Church. The *XIXth Article* supposes the *universal Church* of Christ to be a *visible Society*, and lays down those *outward Acts*, in Vertue whereof its Members become a *visible Society*. His Lordship on the contrary maintains, that the *universal Church* is NO *visible Society*; and in consequence hereof, asserts that those *outward Acts*, *viz.* *Preaching* and *hearing the Word*, *administring* and *receiving the Sacraments*; yea, even the very *Publick Profession of Christianity*, have nothing to do with the Notion of Christ's *universal Church*, but belong only to the Idea of *particular Churches*. So that whereas the *XXVIIth Article* maintains that *Baptism* is that whereby they who receive it rightly, are grafted into THE Church; manifestly meaning thereby the *universal Church*; his Lordship in consequence of his Principles, must teach, that by *Baptism* Men are not grafted into the *universal Church*, but into some one or other *particular Church* only. This is truly the Case; and therefore if his Lordship should any longer insist upon this Plea, that he has pretended to describe

no other but the *universal* INVISIBLE Church; tell him plainly that he answers truly, but nothing to the Purpose. For by this it seems as if he did not deny the *universal* VISIBLE Church, and had attempted at least in describing the *universal* INVISIBLE Church, to preserve the Notion of it intire: But no such Matter as this! No; his Lordship knows of no such thing as an *universal* VISIBLE Church, but in Contradiction both to our *Articles* and to the *Scriptures*, makes it to be altogether INVISIBLE. I say in Contradiction to the *Scriptures*. For I deny what his Lordship asserts without any manner of Proof, That the Notion of the Church of Christ was, at first, only the Number of those who believed him to be the Messiah, i. e. (as he himself explains this) of those who subjected themselves to him as their King, in the Affair of Religion. I deny this, I say, (in the Sense wherein he speaks it) and affirm on the contrary, that the Word Church when used in its utmost Latitude, constantly denotes in Scripture, the Number of those who continued stedfast in the Apostles Doctrine and Fellowship, i. e. who believed all the fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Religion, and who held Communion with the Apostles, and such Ministers, as according to their Directions, were lawfully set over them, and received the Sacraments from their Hands; and consequently who were joined together in one visible Society under Christ the Head. If his Lordship thinks fit to contradict me in this, and will maintain that all who believed Christ to be the Messiah, whether they were found in the Faith or not, whether they received the Sacraments, or whether they rejected them; whether they followed their lawful Ministers, or whether they followed false Teachers, were at first esteemed to be of the

Church: If, I say, his Lordship will maintain this, I must beseech him not to deal by his *Readers*, as he did by his *Audience*, i. e. not barely to assert, but to prove it; and let him prove it when he can.

I cannot forbear, before I take my leave of this Point, to lead my Reader to the grand Principle which seems to have given Birth to this Notion, because I think it will not a little confirm what I have already laid down. Take it then from his Lordship's own Hand. (p) *What I said about inconsistent Images by daily Additions united in the Notion of the Church of Christ—* What was in his Lordship's Mind, think you, when he said this? Why he tells you, *I had in my Mind those Modern Images—those Modern Notions, which give such Account of particular Churches, as exclude from the Favour of God, and from the Church of Christ, many who will, I doubt not, come from the East and from the West, and sit down in the Kingdom of God. The Secret, I think, is now out at once. His Lordship's Doctrine, you know, is, that all sincere Believers are equally entitled to the Benefits of the Gospel. Now since none are entitled to the Benefits of the Gospel, but those who are Members of the Church of Christ; what can be a more clear Consequence than this, that all sincere Believers are Members of Christ's Church! This is one way of writing Divinity! A Scheme is first of all raised according to a Man's own Fancy, and then the Articles and the Scriptures are torn and worried to Death, to make them speak his Sense! There is an evil Fate for ever attending upon such Projects as this; and amongst*

the many Misfortunes which his Lordship now labours under, this is none of the least, that *this* Notion, *this* comprehensive Notion of the Church of Christ, is yet too streight for his much more comprehensive Principles. According to his Lordship's Doctrine of Sincerity, not only sincere Believers, but sincere Persons of all sorts, sincere Jews, sincere Turks, sincere Heathens, are all of them (as I have shewn in treating upon that Subject) equally entitled to the Benefits of the Gospel. And must not all these then be taken into the Church of Christ? Yes, if you can tell how. But tho' his Lordship's Principle requires it, yet his Description will not do it; and how then shall we contrive? I will commit his Lordship to the Conduct of one, whose Company perhaps he may like better than mine, and who is able to let him into this Secret; I mean the famous Quaker Robert Barclay. His Words are these.

Under this CHURCH (*i. e.* under the universal Church) are comprehended all, and as many, of whatsoever Nation, Kindred, Tongue, or People they be (tho' outwardly Strangers, and remote from those who profess Christ —) as become obedient to the HOLY LIGHT and TESTIMONY of God in their Hearts — For this is the universal or Catholick Spirit, by which many are called from all THE FOUR CORNERS of the Earth, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. — There may be Members therefore of the Catholick Church both among Heathens, Turks, Jews, and all the several sorts of Christians — of INTEGRITY and SIMPLICITY of Heart, &c. Barclay, *Apol. Prop. 10. p. 404, 405, Fol. Edit.*

See here! This great Apostle of Sincerity affirms roundly, that a Jew, a Heathen, a Turk, may be a Member of the Catholick Church! Strange, you'll say, that a Man should be capable of being of the Church of Christ, who does not
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so much as *believe in Christ*! But no matter for that. This Man understood his own Principles. He was of his Lordship's mind, that ALL who are obedient to the holy Light, ALL of Integrity and Simplicity of Heart, i. e. (as his Lordship would say) ALL sincere Persons, are intitled to the Benefits of the Gospel. He was not so uncharitable as to suppose that a Jew or a Heathen could not be sincere, and therefore he said what he found himself obliged to say, that a Jew or a Heathen might be a Member of the Catholick Church. His Lordship then sees the way how to make his Description of the Church adequate to the Extensiveness of his Principles. 'Tis but giving up one small Point more, and the Work is done. 'Tis but throwing out the Belief of Jesus Christ, and he will agree with the Quakers and with himself too. — But I hope for better things, and that his Lordship will at length be made sensible, how impossible it is that those Notions should be true, which end in such absurd and extravagant Consequences.

I shall conclude these Observations with a Remark upon his Lordship's Reply to a Consequence charged by the Committee upon this Doctrine of Sincerity, which we are now speaking of. The Consequence is expressed in these Words. That it is making every Man, how illiterate and ignorant soever, his own sole Judge and Director on Earth in the Affair of Religion. The Sense of it seems to be this, that his Lordship has rendred all Direction or Instruction unnecessary to the Salvation of Christians. I believe there is no one who will not own this Inference to be just. For if all sincere Persons are alike intitled to the Favour of God, it must be the same thing as to Salvation, whether a Man be in the right, or whether he be in the wrong; and consequently his Salva-
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tion will be equally secure, whether any one undertakes to *instruct* him better, or whether he be left quietly to enjoy *his own Ignorance*. For Sincerity may be attained under one Degree of Light, as well as under another.

His Lordship has treated the *Committee* upon this Point, as if they denied to the *Illiterate* and *Ignorant* the Liberty of *private Judgment*; which I shall believe, when once it be made appear that they claim an *absolute Authority* over any, and not before. For certain it is, and every one must needs see it, that these two things must always go together. In the mean time I shall take notice of *one* thing which his Lordship hath said in answer to this Objection, of which that the Reader may the better judge, I must premise a few Words.

That every one ought, in Matters relating to his Eternal Salvation, to judge *for himself*, and to pursue that Method of Religion which, after the Use of the best Means which he has, appears to him to be *the true*, is what is universally agreed upon among *Protestants*. It is, I think, also no less generally acknowledged, that *Human Learning* is a very useful, and withal in some Cases, a very necessary Qualification to enable Men to judge aright; and consequently that the *Opinion* of *Learned Men* ought, by those who are not sufficiently learned themselves, to be considered as *one* of those *Means*, which they must have recourse to, in order to the satisfying themselves in their religious Scruples. Not as if any Man's Learning, how great soever, could give him an *Authority* to determine the Conduct of others by his Opinion; but the Case is, that the Judgment of learned Men on one side of a Question, where no plain Proof appears on the other, has the nature of a *moral Evidence*; which Evidence, as

it is sometimes the only *Evidence* that a Man can get, so it may sometimes be so great, as that a Man cannot, without renouncing his Reason, refuse to submit to it. The *unanimous* or *general* Consent of Learned Men, touching any Point which their Learning is supposed to qualify them to judge of, is an *Evidence* which Men usually act upon with as little Scruple, as they do upon any *Evidence* which they receive from their own *immediate* Knowledge. Thus as to Matters of *Law*; tho' the Learned in that Science have no *Authority* to bind others by their Determinations, or to make any one *Statute* otherwise than it really is; yet a *general Agreement* among them, as to any particular Case relating to that Science, is commonly esteemed to be a sufficient Proof, that what they thus agree in, is *the Right*; and a Man who should hazard an *Estate* upon a Notion of his own, in Opposition to their Judgment, would be esteemed little better than *mad*. In like manner, in the Business of *Religion*; tho' no Man, how learned soever, has *Authority* to bind others by his Determination, or to make any one Law of Christ any otherwise than it really is; yet the *general Consent* of learned *Divines*, touching any difficult and dubious Question, is by most Men thought to be a very good Ground for others to proceed upon, insomuch that he who should oppose his own private Judgment to theirs, would (and I think very deservedly) be esteemed *proud* and *opinionated*.

I must indeed confess, that it is not *always* that a Man can find a sure Ground for his Conduct in the Opinion of learned Men. For sometimes the Learned differ *among themselves*, upon Reasons more or less substantial. At other times the *Passions* and *Prejudices* of Men interest themselves

selves in their Disputes, which, wheresoever it happens, it will, so far as it appears, take off that Weight, which their Learning would otherwise give to their Decisions. But this I will venture to lay down as a certain and standing Rule, that *ceteris paribus*, or where all other Circumstances are, or appear to be equal, the Opinion of the *Learned* ought, in the Estimation of every wise Man, to be more than a Ballance to the Opinion of the *Unlearned*; and consequently that in all Disputes about Religion, where a Man cannot by very plain and convincing Reasons satisfy himself, that Side ought to be followed on which the Advantage of *Learning* lies. This is my Notion of the Matter, which, as it is not only consistent with, but manifestly supposes, a *Liberty of private Judgment*; so I am confident it is agreeable to the common Sense and Practice of Mankind.

By what Fate it has happen'd I cannot tell, but so it is, that his Lordship has, if I understand him rightly, very grossly *contradicted* the common Sense of Mankind in this Particular, by denying (in Consequence of what he hath asserted) that the Opinion of learned Men in Matters of Religion, has so much as the nature of a *moral Evidence*. For that which gives the Opinion of learned Men the Force of an *Evidence*, is a Supposition that the *Learned* are (*ceteris paribus*) *better qualified* to judge of these Matters than the *Unlearned*; and this relies upon another Supposition, *viz.* that *Learning* is in it self a very proper; and sometimes *necessary Help*, to enable Men to judge rightly in these Matters. But according to his Lordship, (q) *what is called LEARNING*

(q) Ibid. Sect. 20. p. 98.

is so far from being the most necessary or the most useful Qualification in this Case, that there is nothing which has been seen to administer so many Doubts and so many Differences as that. —

His Lordship, you see, uses the Word *Learning* in the common Acceptation. Wherefore not supposing that my Reader wants to be informed what *Learning* is, I proceed to observe, that here must needs be something couched under this Sentence, which his Lordship did not care plainly to speak out, because, as the Sentence now stands, the latter part of it contains no Contradiction to the former, when yet the Construction necessarily requires that it should. *Learning*, says his Lordship, is SO FAR FROM being the most necessary or the most useful Qualification in this Case, THAT — This way of speaking, I say, requires that what follows should contradict this, and that too in the highest Degree of Contradiction. But 'tis no Contradiction at all to this to say, as his Lordship hath said, that there is nothing which has been seen to administer so many Doubts and so many Differences as *Learning*; for *Learning* may accidentally be made to administer as many Doubts and Differences as you will please to suppose, and yet be of it self a very useful and very necessary Qualification for all that. To make Sense therefore of his Lordship's Assertion, it must run thus: *LEARNING* is SO FAR FROM being the most necessary or the most useful — THAT it is NOT AT ALL either a necessary or a useful Qualification in this Case. That this is his Meaning seems to me to be very plain from the following Words, where, 1. He says, that none are in Experience seen to be less secure from Error than learned Men; which implies thus much at least, viz. that *Learning* does not at all contribute towards the securing Men from Error; for if it did, it would

would be very strange that this Effect of it should never be seen. Again, 2. His Lordship appeals to the *Popish Countries*, and says in effect, that one *ILLITERATE honest Man* is AS CAPABLE of judging for himself in Religion, as ALL their LEARNED MEN united, even supposing them met together in a general Council. The Use of Learning, I presume, is the same in all Countries; and therefore if an *illiterate honest Man*, v. g. in France, be as capable of judging for himself as a Council of learned ones, he will be the same here in Great Britain, or any where else. Now if this be the Case, the Opinion of learned Men entirely loses the nature of a *moral Evidence*, and a Man who labours under any Scruples of Conscience, had as good go for Satisfaction to a *Plowman* as to a Professor.

His Lordship has somewhere, I think, been pleased to promise us, that he would never be so weak as to argue from the Abuse of any thing, against the Use of it. And yet this (which, whether it has happened thro' *Weakness*, or any thing else, I cannot say) appears here very plainly to be the Case. His Lordship has observed that Learning has been, and is employed to evil Purposes, to the raising and keeping up many *Doubts* and *Differences* in Religion; and hence he is pleased to infer, that a Man is as well qualified to judge in Religion without it, as he is with it; which is just as if I should say, that because an Army of Men grows lazy, or turns mutinous, it is therefore no better qualified for, or no more capable of, besieging a Town, than an Army of Children. It was in vertue of this goodly Argument, I suppose, that his Lordship was pleased to bid us look out into the *Popish Countries*; for setting this aside, I must confess I can see no great occasion that there is to travel so far as *Spain* or *Italy*, to

find out either an *honest illiterate Man*, or a *Council of learned ones*. His Lordship very well knows that there are such things here at Home as *Laymen of Conscience*; let him then, if he pleases, look out among these, and see whether the *common Sense* of every one of them, I may say, of any of them, be deep enough to reach to the bottom of every Dispute in Religion, and that even about necessary Points. How *deplorable* a thing soever it may seem to him, *if the great and important Points of Christianity, those upon which Mens Eternal Salvation depends, could not be judged of without Learning*, yet I am afraid 'tis what will always be found to be true, and so much the more so, by how much the greater the Number of those is, who are for removing old Foundations, and settling Christianity upon new invented Schemes. Even his Lordship himself is now embark'd in a Controversy which, as he truly says, *touches the Vitals of all that is Good*. And is then every *illiterate honest Man* among us *as well qualified* to judge of this Debate as the *whole Convocation*? It may be thought perhaps that his Lordship in Decency forbore to put this Question to his Readers; and indeed, considering how decently he has used the *Committee* in some other Respects, I might be of that Opinion too, were it not that I saw a much better reason why he should send us into the *Popish Countries*. The *Argument* and the *Example* ought certainly to be both of a Piece, and therefore since the *Argument* is drawn from the *Abuse of Learning*, thither it was fit that the *Appeal* should be made, where Learning is *most of all abused*.

And yet his Lordship is unhappy even in this Appeal! I have look'd into those Countries with *the same Eyes*, I presume, with which his Lordship has look'd into them, and, so far as I can per-

perceive, the common People there follow the old Maxim, of *believing as the Church believes*, and accordingly are ready to swallow down every thing which their Teachers, *i. e.* the *learned Men* amongst them, think fit to cook up for them, as sound and wholesome Doctrine. A shrewd Sign this, you'll say, of their great *Capacity of judging*! But whence happens this? Why even from the want of that very thing which his Lordship says is of *no Use*! These Men, you must know, are entirely given up to their *common Sense*, and debar'd of all those Improvements which good Literature would afford them; so that their Minds being thus raw and unprepared, they are disposed to receive any Impression which Men of Craft and Design are willing to stamp upon them. But in the *Protestant Countries* the Case is quite otherwise. Here our *Bibles* are open to all, and Variety of excellent Books written in the National Language by *learned Men*. Here we have *Comments, Sermons, PRESERVATIVES, &c.* in the room of *Legends*, and I know not what, insomuch that our common People are *perfect Scholars* in comparison to the common Sort of those amongst whom Popery prevails. And what is the Consequence of this? Why, that which you will always and every where find, in Proportion as the Power of *Learning* prevails. Our People, you see, are not altogether so tame, they know pretty well the Difference between *Religion* and *Superstition*, and are able to distinguish those who mean them well, from those who come to put a Yoke about their Necks. What Pity was it then that his Lordship did not draw out one of *his* well instructed *Lay-men*, confront him to a *Popish Council*, and tell them that he is a *better Judge of Religion than they*! There would certainly have been

been somewhat more of Truth in this Assertion; but then it would not have answered his Lordship's Purpose so well. For every one must needs have seen upon what Account it was that he fetch'd his Champion from among the *Protestants*, and consequently have discovered that Learning *is*, even in his own Opinion, what he would yet make us believe it is *not*, i. e. *good for something*.

When his Lordship shall think fit to give us some better Reasons for what he has laid down, it will then be time enough to enter with him farther into this Debate. In the mean while I must confess my self no less sorry than surprized, that his Lordship should think it decent in him to *vilify* that, the Benefit whereof he himself does so sensibly experience. His Lordship knows and feels the Advantages of a *liberal* and *learned* Education. And I may presume to say, that had Mr. Hoadly, instead of being sent to the *University*, been confined to a *Shop*, he would probably have found, that there would have been very little for him to do in any Controversy with THE BISHOP OF BANGOR.

VI.

I have now finished what I intend to offer in Defence of the *first Part* of the *Representation*, not without Hopes that I shall be thought, by impartial Readers, to have done Justice both to his Lordship and to the *Committee*. If it should be objected against me, that I have not taken notice of *every thing* which his Lordship hath said, I shall answer, that as it would have been an *endless* Task to have undertaken this, so it would have been a very *needless* one. Those who think that it would have been to the purpose to have repeated the same thing a hundred times

times over, and are never well pleased but when they read in *Folio*, may perhaps be uneasy that I have not followed his Lordship *Step by Step*. But those who are for having Things at the smallest Expence, will, I hope, find no reason to complain, seeing there is not (to the best of my Knowledge) any thing omitted under this Head, which an attentive Reader may not very easily judge of, by the help of what has been laid down. However, as I do not expect, so neither do I desire, to be my own sole Judge in this Case. And therefore if his Lordship, or any of his Friends, shall think that he has been unfairly dealt with, I do hereby promise, that as soon as I shall be convinced of this, I will do that which every Writer in such a Case ought to do, and which every honest and impartial Writer always will do; acknowledge my Mistake, and publickly ask his Lordship's Pardon.

F I N I S.

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